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THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

IN

FRANCE AND GERMANY

BY

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PREFACE.

In this volume I have endeavoured to give an account of the principal attempts which have been made in France and Germany philosophically to comprehend and explain the history of mankind, with a reasoned estimate of their value. I have still to describe and criticise the general philosophies of history which have appeared in Italy and England; to indicate what light has been thrown on the course, laws, and significance of human development by the progress of the sciences; and to notice the chief contributions which have been made to the discussion of the special problems of historical speculation. In bibliographical appendices I mean briefly to characterise the large number of writings on the philosophy of history which, from their inferior importance, or other causes, have not been examined in the work itself.

At a time when all history is rapidly tending to become scientific, and almost all science is adopting historical methods, it requires but little perspicacity to foresee that thoughtful minds will soon be far more generally and earnestly engaged in the philosophical study of history than they have ever yet been. It cannot, therefore, be inopportune to record what has already been attempted in this department, and to indicate

what has been achieved, and where and why there has been failure.

The substance, or, I should perhaps rather say, the germ, of the following work was delivered in two series of lectures at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution. With the exception of some pages on Comte and Hegel, little has been directly transferred from the lectures to the book; and I here mention the former merely because I would gladly associate in some measure the latter with an Institution which has had a very honourable place in the intellectual history of Scotland, and from the members of which I have repeatedly received much indulgent kindness.

The volume has been a considerable time in passing through the press. Thus the chapter on the historical speculations of MM. Michelet and Quinet was printed and revised previous to the death of M. Michelet, which took place on 10th February 1874.

Although the work was begun and has been carried on mainly as an introduction to other studies which have longer occupied my thoughts, it has cost a considerable amount of labour, and may, I hope, not only be of use until a better appears, but help, to some extent, any one who hereafter engages in the same task, to accomplish it with more ease and success than I have done.

I have to thank my learned colleague, Professor Crombie, for his great kindness in assisting me to revise all but a few sheets of this volume.

Abbey Park Villa, St Andrews,
1*st June* 1874.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

	PAGE
Aim of the present work,	1
The absolute origin of historical philosophy cannot be discovered,	2
All great religions have involved historical theory,	4
How philosophy includes historical speculation,	5
How political discussion leads to historical speculation,	7
The philosophy of history is a natural growth of history itself,	8
History in the great oriental nations,	9
The Jewish historical records,	11
History among the Greeks,	12
The idea of a universal history was the result of Roman history,	14
Christianity introduced into history the consciousness of a spiritual unity of the human race and the conception of a divine plan gradually unfolded in time,	16
Sketch of the historical philosophy of Augustine,	17
Its merits and defects,	22
The medieval mind had not a sufficiently comprehensive acquaintance with historical facts to frame a philosophy of history,	23
It could neither sift nor scientifically use the facts accessible to it,	24
How modern historians differ from ancient and medieval historians,	26
The growth of history towards a scientific stage has been partly the consequence and partly the cause of the growth of certain ideas,	28
How far the idea of progress was known among the oriental nations,	29
In Greece and Rome human development was thought of as progressive, retrogressive, and cyclical, but in none of these ways consistently or comprehensively. This proved,	30
Christianity and the idea of progress,	37
The Gnostics, Montanists, and early Millenarians,	38
The Christian Fathers,	39
The idea of progress in the middle ages,	40
It implies the idea of unity,	42
Dawn of the consciousness of human unity,	43
Traces of this consciousness in Egypt, China, India, and Persia,	44
The services of Greece to the cause of human unity,	47
Those of Rome,	49

Christianity supplied what was defective in the Greco-Roman view, . 51
Gradual realisation of the idea of human unity in the Christian world, . 53
Why the history of the idea of freedom is not traced, . . . 61

BOOK I.—FRANCE.

Chapter I.—BODIN AND CARTESIANISM.

Sketch of the progress of history in France from its rise to the sixteenth century, ... 65
Bodin the first French author who took a philosophical survey of history, 68
Character of his 'Methodus,' 69
The place he assigns to human history, ... 70
His recognition of progress in history, ... 71
His recognition of law in history, ... 73
Sought to explain events, chiefly by general physical and political causes, *ib.*
Attempted to explain the origin of nations and to divide time into epochs, 75
Influence of Cartesianism on historical study, ... 76
The idea of progress in Pascal, Perrault, Fontenelle, &c., . . . 78

Chapter II.—BISHOP BOSSUET.

Was Bossuet the founder of the philosophy of history? . . . 81
Summary of his 'Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle,' . . . 83
The true and the false in his attempt to rest the philosophy of history on the doctrine of Providence, ... 84
He erred as to the final cause of history, ... 86
Did justice only to the Christian element in history, . . . 88
Unfairness of Mr Buckle's criticism of Bossuet, ... 89

Chapter III.—MONTESQUIEU.

Mental change in France between 1681 and 1748, . . . 93
The central conception of the 'Spirit of Laws,' 95
Montesquieu's method defective inasmuch as he did not systematically compare coexistent and consecutive social states, . . . 96
Often explained historical facts when he failed to reach their general laws, 97
He had an inaccurate notion of inductive law, ... 99
In treating of the influences of governments he confounded two distinct methods, ... 100
His defective method led him to exaggerate the influence of physical agencies and to overlook that it is chiefly indirect, . . . 103
He proved and applied the principle that the course of history is chiefly determined by general causes, ... 105
He introduced the economical element into historical science, . . 106
The concluding books of his work, ... 107

Chapter IV.—TURGOT.

His character, ... 109
His chief service to the science of history lies in the comprehensive view he gave of human progression, ... 110
His sketch of a political geography, ... 112
His anticipation of Comte's "law of three states," . . . 113
He gave it no irreligious application, ... 114

Chapter V.—VOLTAIRE.

Why such different estimates have been formed of his character and influence, 116
Aim of his 'Essay on the Manners and Spirit of Nations,' . . 117
The qualities displayed in it. Critical spirit, ... 118
Independence of judgment, . . 119
Hostility to Christianity, . . . 120
Want of comprehensiveness, . . 121
Want of philosophical depth, . . 122
The views of Voltaire's contemporaries on the course of history, . . 123

Chapter VI.—CONDORCET.

Circumstances in which his 'Sketch of the Progress of the Human Spirit' was written, ... 125
Its fundamental idea, ... 127
Its division of human development into epochs, ... *ib.*
Imperfections of the division, ... 128
Exaggerated and inconsistent view of human perfectibility, . . 129
Importance of the last chapter of the work, ... 131
The tendencies of progress maintained to be towards (1) the distinction of inequality between nations, (2) the destruction of inequality between classes, and (3) the improvement of individuals. These tendencies considered, ... 132

Chapter VII.—THE THEOCRATIC SCHOOL.

The French Revolution and historical speculation, . . . 139
Origin of the theocratic school, ... 140
Its representatives, ... 141
Its antagonism to modern philosophy, ... 143
Its defence of absolute authority as the basis of society, . . . 147
The historical theory of M. Ballanche, ... 149
The theocratic ideal of society, ... 151
Historical formulæ of M. de Bonald, ... 154

Chapter VIII.—SAINT-SIMON AND FOURIER.

Distinctive principle of Socialism, ... 155
Character and influence of Saint-Simon, ... 156
Place which he assigns to the science of history, ... 157

His laws of two states from which Comte's law of three states must have been derived, ... 158
His attempt to reduce historical to physical law, ... 160
He sought to raise his historical philosophy on the foundation laid by Condorcet, ... 162
Its leading principle is that general intelligence and individual intelligence are developed according to the same law, and pass through precisely parallel stages, ... 163
Saint-Simon divides history into organic and critical periods, . . 164
Attempts to arrange the facts of history into series corresponding to the chief phases of human nature, ... 165
Also attempts to arrange the various societies of men into a scale graduated according to their degree of culture, ... *ib.*
Assumes the rudest stages of culture to be the oldest, . . . 166
Fourier's exaggeration of the principle of perfectibility, . . . 167
His law of "passional attraction," 168
His division of history into four great periods corresponding to infancy, youth, manhood, and old age, ... 169

Chapter IX.—COUSIN AND JOUFFROY.

I.

The eclectic school, ... 172
Relation of Cousin to Hegel, ... 173
His view of the connection between psychology and the philosophy of history correct, ... 174
He errs in substituting human reason for human nature, . . . 176
In his division of intelligence into spontaneous and reflective, he confuses a number of distinctions, ... 178
His distribution of history into the three epochs of the infinite, finite, and their relation, rests on an inaccurate analysis of reason, and is inconsistent with facts, ... 185
His optimism, ... 189
His views regarding the influence of places on history inconsistent and erroneous, ... 190
His theory of nations, ... 192
The theory examined, ... 193
His theory of war examined, ... 195
His theory of great men, ... 199
Its examination, ... 200

II.

Jouffroy's writings on the Philosophy of History, ... 206
Summary of his 'Reflections,' 207
Remarks, ... 210
Summary of his essay on 'The Present State of Humanity,' . . 211
How far inconclusive, ... 213
Dissent from his speculations as to the relation of England, France, and Germany to the future of humanity, ... 215

Chapter X.—GUIZOT.

Connection of doctrinaire politics with eclectic philosophy, . . 219
Guizot as historian and historical philosopher, ... 221
How his historical works are related to one another, . . . 223
Examination of his opinion that French civilisation is the type or model of civilisation, ... 226
Criticism of his account of civilisation, ... 233
How he distinguishes ancient from modern civilisation, . . . 235
His vindication of the notion of political legitimacy, . . . 236
Its futility, ... 237
Summary of the 'Course of 1829,' 239
The scientific spirit and character of Guizot's method, . . . 240
His proof of the existence of historical science, ... 241

Chapter XI.—THE SOCIALISTIC SCHOOL CONTINUED: BUCHEZ AND LEROUX.

I.

Literary life of M. Buchez, ... 242
Analysis of his 'Introduction to the Science of History,' . . . 243
His definition of the science of history, ... *ib.*
Dependence of the science on the ideas of humanity and progress, . 244
Summary of the discussion on 'The Methods of the Science of History,' . 245
His division of history into four epochs, each initiated by a revelation, . 249
General estimate of his work, ... 250

II.

Literary life of M. Leroux, ... 252
His 'Refutation of Eclecticism,' 253
The theory of historical development expounded in his 'De l'Humanité' rests on his definition of man—"an animal transformed by reason and united to humanity," 254
His view of continuous progress, ... 255
"The axiom of solidarity," 256
Progress represented as a continuous advance towards equality, with three stages corresponding to the three chief forms of caste, . . 257

Chapter XII.—AUGUSTE COMTE.

What parts of Comte's works treat of the philosophy of history, . . 259
General aim of Comte's labours, ... 260
The place of the philosophy of history in his system, . . . 261
He attempts to combine the truths of order and progress, and so to avoid the one-sidedness both of the reactionists and revolutionists, . . *ib.*
He did not borrow from Hegel or Schelling, ... 262
Fairness and unfairness in his estimate of the past, . . . 264
His "law of the three states," 267

It rests on a confusion of aspects of things with eras of time, . . 269
Where it applies at all it applies only partially, ... 272
How Comte treats the facts inconsistent with it, ... 273
How J. S. Mill deals with them, ... 275
M. Littré and Comte's law, ... *ib.*
Littré's law of four states proceeds on the denial of a truth insisted on by Comte, and is contradicted by the facts, ... 279
Comte's Positive Religion should be counted as a fourth state, . . 281
Mill's assertion of the compatibility of Positivism and Theism irreconcilable with his acceptance of the Comtist law, ... 283

Chapter XIII.—THE DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL: MICHELET AND QUINET.

I.

Democracy in France, ... 285
Writings of M. Michelet which bear on the philosophy of history, . 286
His relation to Vico, ... 287
His 'Introduction to Universal History' represents history as the progressive realisation of freedom in humanity, ... 291
Account of the work, ... 292
Some of its errors, ... 295
The 'Bible of Humanity,' 297

II.

Life of M. Quinet, ... 298
His relation to Herder, ... 300
He regards history as the manifestation of free-will, . . . 301
Maintains that religion is the generative principle of civilisation, . . 303
His polemic against the optimism of the doctrinarian historical philosophy, 304
Its substantial justice, ... 306
Logical error of the doctrinarian historians, ... 308

Chapter XIV.—THE DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL CONTINUED: DE TOCQUEVILLE, ODYSSE-BAROT, DE FERRON, AND LAURENT.

How De Tocqueville's works bear on historical philosophy, . . 311
Character of M. Odysse-Barot's 'Letters on the Philosophy of History,' . 313
Examination of his three so-called laws, ... 314
M. de Ferron in his 'Theory of Progress' attempts to combine the principles of Vico and Saint-Simon, and to combat Cæsarism, . . 320
How M. Laurent's 'Philosophy of History' is related to his 'Studies on the History of Humanity,' 321
It deals chiefly with the moral development of humanity, . . . 323
And surveys history rather from a religious than a scientific point of view, 324
It is an important contribution to natural theology, . . . 325
Inaccuracy of Professor Bona Meyer's criticism of it, . . . *ib.*
Summary of the second book of M. Laurent's work, . . . 328

BOOK II.—GERMANY.

Chapter I.—THE PROGRESS OF HISTORIOGRAPHY IN GERMANY.

Historical inquiry was stimulated in Germany by the Renaissance and Reformation, although both of these events led men to value the knowledge of history merely as a means, ... 333
Ecclesiastical historiography in Germany was first polemic, . . 334
next pietistic, . . *ib.*
then pragmatic, . . 335
afterwards rationalistic, . . *ib.*
and has become philosophical, . . 336
Civil historiography has run a nearly parallel course, . . . *ib.*
In the sixteenth century history still appeared in the form of Chronicles, *ib.*
In the seventeenth century learned historical collections were made, . 337
About the middle of the eighteenth century a school of learned historians arose in the universities, ... 338
The German Illuminism gave rise to a school which attempted to philosophise on history, ... 339
And which was succeeded by one more critical and profound, . . 341

Chapter II.—THE RISE OF HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY IN GERMANY: LEIBNITZ, ISELIN, WEGELIN, SCHLÖZER, VON MÜLLER.

The services of Leibnitz to the philosophy of history, . . . 344
His optimism, ... 345
The idea of there being a philosophy of history received by the Germans from France, ... 347
Chladni's 'General Science of History,' . . . . . *ib.*
Character of Iselin, ... 348
And of his work entitled 'Philosophical Conjectures on the History of Humanity,' . . . . . *ib.*
Account of this treatise, ... 349
Wegelin's historical works, ... 351
His 'Five Memoirs on the Philosophy of History,' . . . 353
Analysis and criticism of these Memoirs, ... 355
Schlözer as an historian, ... 361
His "ideal" of a universal history, ... 362
Better realised by Von Müller than by himself, ... 363

Chapter III.—LESSING.

In what sense a philosopher, ... 366
In his 'Education of the Human Race' he does not sketch a philosophy of history from the stand-point of religion, but treats of revelation in relation to history, ... 367

He regards revelation as the education of the race, and as differing from natural religion only in form, ... 368
Narrowness and inconsistency of this view, ... *ib.*
He conceives of the Old and New Testaments as school-books of the human race, the former of which has been, and the latter of which will be, outgrown, ... 369
Remarks on the way in which he has presented the idea of a divine education of humanity, ... 372

Chapter IV.—HERDER.

How led to the thought that there must be a philosophy of history, . 375
Character of his 'Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind,' . 376
General view of its first eight books, ... 377
Herder conceives of spirit in such a way as to make his belief in freedom illogical, ... 379
Treats of the lower stages of human life with more ability than the higher, 380
Insists on the interdependence of men as a truth of historical philosophy, ... *ib.*
Tries to show where man originated, ... 381
Marks the place in history of each nation and age, . . . 382
His catholicity of feeling and comprehensiveness of view, . . . *ib.*
He regards humanity as the end of history, and maintains that it is realised freely through reason and justice, ... 383
Vagueness of his conception of humanity, ... 384
And of most of his general conceptions, ... 385
The five propositions of his fifteenth book, ... 386

Chapter V.—KANT AND SCHILLER.

The thought with which Kant's 'Idea of a Universal History from a cosmopolitical point of view' starts, ... 388
Explanation and criticism of its nine propositions, viz.—
1°, That all the natural tendencies of each creature have been so formed as that they will finally reach a complete and appropriate development, ... 389
2°, That the natural tendencies of man, which have for destination the use of reason, must find their perfect development, not in the individual, but in the species, ... *ib.*
3°, That nature has willed that man should draw from his own internal resources by the right use of his reason what happiness and perfection he is to possess, ... 390
4°, That the means nature employs to bring about the development of man's powers is their antagonism in the social state, . 391
5°, That the most important problem for the human race is the establishment of a universal civil society in which political justice will reign, ... *ib.*
6°, That this is also its most difficult problem, . . . 392
7°, That this problem implies a regular constitution of international relations, ... *ib.*

8°, That the history of the human race may be regarded as the accomplishment of a secret plan of nature to solve this problem, 393
9°, That a philosophical universal history must be composed from this point of view, ... *ib.*
Kant gives an illegitimate place to *a priori* speculation and to the principle of final causes, ... 396
His view of the particular final cause of history is erroneous, . . 398
Defence of it by Rosenkranz, ... *ib.*
Kant's treatise 'Of Perpetual Peace,' and the treatises of others on the same subject, ... 399
Estimate of their worth, ... 401
Kant's review of Herder's 'Ideen,' 403
His 'Conjectural Commencement of the History of Mankind,' . . *ib.*
His attempt to give definiteness to the idea of organic development, . 404
Schiller's relation to Kant, ... 405
Summary of his Inaugural Discourse on Universal History, . . 406
He showed the place and importance of art in history, . . . 407
His three epochs of history, ... 408

Chapter VI.—FICHTE.

Fichte's theory of history rests on the principle that philosophy is to be kept separate from experience, ... 410
He fails to establish this principle, ... 411
Maintains that the end of the life of mankind on earth is to order all their relations with freedom according to reason, ... 413
Divides history into five epochs,—the state of innocence, of progressive sin, of completed sin, of science, and of art, ... 414
His views on the origin of civilisation, ... 415
Hypothesis of a primitive normal people surrounded by earth-born savages, 416
Character of the lectures on the third age, ... 417
Cosmopolitanism of the 'Characteristics,' . . . . *ib.*
Different spirit of the 'Discourses to the German Nation,' . . 418
Tone of thought and feeling in the lectures 'On the Doctrine of the State,' 420

Chapter VII.—SCHELLING.

Character of Schelling, ... 421
His earliest discussion of the question, Is a philosophy of history possible? 422
Point of view from which the 'System of Transcendental Idealism' is written, ... 423
Nature resolved into intelligence and development represented as universal, ... 424
Views adopted by Schelling from Kant and Fichte, ... 425
Human history regarded by him as characterised by the union of freedom and necessity, ... 426
Also as a self-evolution of the absolute, and divisible into a period of destiny, of nature, and of providence, ... 427
In his 'Lectures on the Method of Academic Study' he maintains the hypothesis of a primitive cultured people, ... 428

Represents history as the ideal side of the Absolute, and the ancient world, as the real and the modern world, as the ideal side of history, . 428
Considers the primary characteristic of Christianity to be its regarding the universe as history, ... *ib.*
Considers the end of history to be the formation of a State in which freedom and necessity are harmonised, ... 429
Considers that a philosophy or science of history must be derived from theology or philosophy, ... 430
In his 'Philosophy and Religion' he maintains that the finite world is a falling away from the Absolute, ... 431
Represents history as consisting of two parts,—the departure of humanity from the centre of existence, and its return, ... 432
And assails the doctrine of continuous historical progress, . . *ib.*
In his 'Inquiries into Human Freedom' he represents history as a lengthened conflict between self-will and universal will, ending in the triumph of the latter, ... 433
Schelling's views on history form no system, and are mostly unproved, . *ib.*
His method is neither legitimately inductive nor deductive, . . 434
His "absolute" is a creation of fancy, ... 435
In defending it against the attack of Sir William Hamilton, Professor Ferrier erred both as to that absolute and Hamilton's relative, . 436
It was an error in Schelling to represent the absolute, and not humanity, as the subject of history, ... 437
He failed in all attempts to derive history from the absolute by evolution, emanation, or disseverance, ... 438
He saw clearly that history combines freedom and necessity, without being able to show how, ... *ib.*
His divisions of history have no value, ... 439
His affirmation that history is a divine poem is merely a metaphor, . 440

Chapter VIII.—THE SCHOOL OF SCHELLING: STUTZMANN, STEFFENS, AND GOERRES.

Sources of Stutzmann's 'Philosophy of the History of Mankind,' . 443
Leading doctrines of the work, ... *ib.*
Character of Steffens, ... 445
Relation of his 'Anthopology' to the philosophy of history, . . *ib.*
Regarded man as the synthesis of nature, ... 446
Held that the goal of history is the realisation of the divine image in humanity, ... 447
Summary of his work, 'The Present Time,' &c., ... 448
Historical writings of Goerres, ... 450
He attempts to exhibit the fundamental principle of history, . . 451
To show the relation of its secondary principles to its primary principle, . 452
And to distribute history into epochs, ... *ib.*
Fancifulness of his views on the course of history, . . . 453

Chapter IX.—FREDERICK SCHLEGEL.

His qualifications for historical speculation, ... 455
Connection between his 'Philosophy of Life' and 'Philosophy of History,' 457
Presuppositions of the latter work, ... *ib.*
The criticism of it by Gans unjust, ... 458
Contradictory professions with which Schlegel starts, . . . 460
His opinions regarding the primitive condition and history of man, . 461
His view of Chinese, Hindoo, Egyptian, and Hebrew history, . . 462
His attempt to prove that a primitive revelation underlies the various forms of heathenism, ... 463
His lectures on Persia, Greece, and Rome, ... 464
His classification of historical phenomena, ... 465
The lectures on medieval history, ... 466
His Roman Catholicism, ... 467
The three principles which he regards as the laws of the historical world, 468
His account of the Reformation questioned, ... 469
His hopes as to the future of humanity, ... 471

Chapter X.—KRAUSE.

The man, ... 472
His style, ... 473
His followers, ... 474
His system a vast monistic theory, which ascends analytically from self-consciousness to Deity, and descends synthetically from Deity, so as to comprehend and explain the whole organism of existence, . 476
He defines the philosophy of history as the knowledge of life and its evolution, ... 477
Divides it into pure and applied, ... *ib.*
Attempts to lay its foundation in metaphysics, and the special philosophical sciences, ... 478
His views on the life of God, the life of the world, and the life of humanity, 479
His dissection of the internal organism of society, ... 481
His description of the course of life, ... 482
And of the three ages in the history of humanity, . . . 483
His theory one of the most elaborate attempts at an *a priori* explanation of history, ... 485
Much empirical matter introduced into the reasoning, . . . 487
His inductions valuable, although erroneously put forth as deductions, . *ib.*
He had the merit of seeing the close connection between the philosophy of history and universal biology, ... 488
And of showing historical development to be a kind of organic evolution, 489
He supposed the resemblance between the development of the race and that of the individual closer than it is, ... 491
The place of free-will in his system, ... 493
His fancifulness, ... 494

Chapter XI.—HEGEL.

The Hegelian philosophy of history part of a comprehensive system, . 496
The system an absolute idealism, all the divisions of which are determined by an inherent principle or law of movement, . . . 497
How far Hegelianism may be true in regarding the universe as a development or history, ... 498
The Hegelian view of human history involves all the speculative and practical difficulties inherent in the Hegelian philosophy in general, 499
Hegel's idea of God obscure and ambiguous, ... 503
His 'Philosophy of History' pervaded by a religious spirit, . . 504
His method so separates the elements of history as to make historical synthesis impossible, ... 505
He treats ably, however, of the separate developments of history, especially of the æsthetical, ... 507
religious, ... 510
and philosophical, ... 511
He regards history as original, or reflective, or philosophical, . . 512
Aim of philosophical history, ... 513
Non-historical peoples and countries, ... 514
Theatre of history, ... 515
The three great stages of history, ... *ib.*
China, ... *ib.*
India, ... 516
Persia, including Judea, ... 517
Egypt, ... 518
Greece, ... 519
Rome, ... 520
Christianity, ... 521
The epochs of Christian history, ... 522
Unsatisfactoriness of Hegel's view of the relation of nature and spirit, . 524
Of his view of spirit itself, ... 525
And of his view of the purpose of historical development, . . 527
His optimism, hero-worship, conception of freedom, &c., . . . 528
His error in representing the course of history as a straight line, . . 531
Examination and disproof of his formula of the three stages, . . 532
What his followers have done in the department of history, . . 540

Chapter XII.—SCHELLING, BUNSEN, AND LASAULX.

I.

Phases of Schelling's negative philosophy, ... 542
His positive philosophy, ... 544
Claims to be an historical and religious philosophy, . . . 545
The 'Introduction to Mythology,' 546
Schellings answer to the question, What makes a people? . . 547
His view of the connection between the philosophy of mythology, and the philosophy of history, ... 549
How far the "Exposition of the Rational Philosophy" touches on history, 550

How monotheism, theism, and pantheism are conceived of by Schelling, . 551
How mythology is related to monotheism, ... 552
And to revelation, ... 553
Mythology and revelation constitute history, ... 554
Influence of Schelling's positive philosophy, ... 555

II.

Central thought of Bunsen's life, ... 556
Works to which it gave rise, ... 557
The religious conception with which Bunsen's historical philosophy starts, *ib.*
His views as to the aim and method of historical philosophy, . . 558
Man's consciousness of God the chief motive force in history, . . 559
Action and reaction of the individual and the community in history, . *ib.*
Also of intuition and reflection. Whence the epochs of history, . . 560
The antithesis between thought and will in history, . . . *ib.*
Outline of Bunsen's work, 'God in History,' 561
How far it seemed to himself to approximate to, and how far to fall short of, a philosophy of history, ... 562
His recognition of the power and significance of comparative philology, . 563
His conception of the course of linguistic evolution, . . . 564
His views of historical method not sufficiently comprehensive, . . 565
Some particular errors into which he has fallen, ... *ib.*

III.

Lasaulx, in what respects like and in what unlike Bunsen, . . 566
His essays bearing on the philosophy of history, ... 567
The presuppositions on which he rests the philosophy of history should not be assumed, ... 568
His generalisations based too much on analogy, ... 569
He conceives humanity and nations to pass, like individuals, through the stages of childhood, youth, manhood, and old age, . . . 570
He errs in regarding the movement of history from east to west, and war as divine and objective laws, ... 571
His formulæ for the special phases of human development, . . 572
He fails to show that nations, like individuals, must die of age, . . 573

Chapter XIII.—LAZARUS, LOTZE, AND HERMANN.

I.

Historical theories in Germany have generally sprung from philosophical and in France from political principles, ... 575
Baader and the philosophy of history, ... 576
Schopenhauer and the philosophy of history, ... *ib.*
Pessimism, ... 577
Herbart as the antithesis of Hegel, ... 579
His view of the connection between psychology and the science of history, *ib.*
Applied by Prof. Lazarus, ... 580
Principles adopted by Lazarus from W. v. Humboldt, . . . 581
What influence he attributes to formative ideas, ... 583
He has followed a true path but not sufficiently far, . . . 584
Summary of his essay on the "Condensation of Thought," . . 585

II.

Lotze not a "Herbartist," 586
His intellectual character and activity, ... 587
How his 'Mikrokosmus' is more than a philosophy of history, . . 588
Wise scepticism displayed in it, ... 590
Summary of its author's views as to—
the creation of man, ... 591
the purpose of history, ... 592
the efficient forces of history, ... *ib.*
the external conditions of historical development, . . . 593
the general course of historical development, ... *ib.*
and the various phases of development,—intellectual, . . 594
industrial, . . . 595
artistic, . . . *ib.*
religious, . . . *ib.*
and public or social, . 596

III.

Prof. Hermann's 'Philosophy of History' the result of long labours, . *ib.*
His perception of the importance of the philosophy of history, . . 597
He regards Hegel as almost his sole predecessor, ... 598
Reason of this error, ... 599
What he censures in Hegel, ... 600
What he regards as the fundamental distinction between Hegel's philosophy of history and his own, ... 601
How far right and how far wrong in opposing an organic and defending a teleological point of view, ... 602
Inaccuracy of his analysis of the contents of culture, . . . 605
The "general law of history" derived from the analysis not verifiable, . 606
The analogy associated with it delusive, ... *ib.*
Character of the chapters devoted to particular sections of history, . 607

INTRODUCTION.

One result of this inquiry should be to afford a clearer view of what the philosophy or science of history is than any definition or general description could do. I mean to pass in review the more famous of the many attempts which have been made within the last century and a half to discover the laws of order which regulate human affairs, and to indicate what appear to me their chief merits and defects; and if I accomplish with the slightest measure of success my purpose, the conceptions of the reader as to the character, scope, and method of the philosophy of history, as to what it ought to do and how it ought to do it, should be constantly increasing in definiteness and accuracy as the inquiry itself advances. It may be that even at its close there will still remain possibilities of misapprehension, reasons for uncertainty, as to the precise sphere and method of the philosophy of history; but the proper place to attempt to remove these is obviously not at the outset, but at the end of our historical review, when, from the vantage-ground gained by a study of the thoughts and labours of the past in this department of research, its failures and successes, we may hope to get a clearer view than we could otherwise have attained of the duties of the future, of the aims which a philosophy of history may reasonably propose to itself, and of the processes to be pursued and the errors to be avoided if it would realise them.

There is no need, then, that we should start with any definition of the philosophy of history, or any attempt at a precise description of what it is. On the contrary, it may be better

that we begin with a notion quite general, even although vague. That the reign of law somehow extends over human affairs—that history has not been abandoned to caprice and chance, is not mere anarchy and chaos, but embraced within a system of order, more or less perfect—that amidst all its apparent confusion and incoherence there has been some sort of growth, some sort of development of the mind and spirit of the human race—that events are connected by some determinate relationships, and that one social state arises out of another, to which it retains some correspondence in character,—is a conviction which every man is likely to bring with him to the study of history; and more in the way of presupposition is certainly not necessary, and perhaps not desirable. The error, in fact, most to be guarded against at starting, is a too definite or rather too narrow view of law and order; one drawn from physical science alone and applicable to physical nature alone; the transference of such a view into the moral world with the latent or conscious determination to find it hold true there, without any modifications corresponding to the essential differences which distinguish mind from matter.

The origin of the philosophy of history, its absolute origin or commencement, is not to be dated from the time when it began to be cultivated as a distinct division of knowledge. It is at a comparatively late stage that any science definitively separates itself from contiguous fields of knowledge and assumes an independent form. The man of genius who is called the founder of a science merely brings together its already existing elements, its *disjecta membra*, which lie far and wide apart imbedded in the most diverse studies, organically unites them through some great thought, some happy discovery, and breathes into the body thus formed the breath of life. There is no science, even among those which like geology or political economy we in one sense rightly enough call recent, whose history is all in the daylight; there is none which has come at once into the full enjoyment of individual existence like a Pallas from the brain of Jove; the origins of science, like the origins of all things, lie beyond the utmost limits research has yet attained. In very old poetry, and in the very oldest mythology,

there are rudimentary geological speculations. The atomic doctrine of Dalton is but a more developed form of the hypothesis maintained by the Hindu Kanada and the Greek Democritus. The development theory of Darwin goes clearly back not only to Maillet and Lamarck, but to Anaximander and Empedocles. Although political economy established its claims to be a separate science only in the eighteenth century, it may be truly said, seeing that economical laws have always operated and always forced men to take some cognisance of them and yield some obedience to them, to have had under one form or another always and everywhere an existence. The philosophy of history is no exception to the rule which every other science has obeyed; on the contrary, it is perhaps its most striking example. While men still dispute as to the reality, and even as to the possibility, of its separate scientific existence, religion, poetry, speculation of various kinds, political movements, the cares and trials of common life, have for countless generations been bringing its problems in manifold forms before the human mind and into contact with the human heart. As diffused through these things, it is, and for we know not how long has been, widely present. There may have been a time during which man felt in no degree the mystery of his own being, but no direct records remain of such a time; and so far as can be gathered from the mere literary monuments of our race, a kind of philosophy of history may have been as old as history itself, and the first question man proposed to himself may have been that which Milton puts into the mouth of Adam—"How came I thus, how here?"

The very lowest forms of religion are not mere embodiments of the feelings of fear, or love, or dependence, but consist in great part of rude speculations, strange fancies, as to the making and the meaning of nature and man. It is still truer of Asiatic than of European civilisations that they are based on religion, and that the rationale of their distinctive institutions are to be sought in their theological creeds. In all the chief religions of the East we find speculations more or less elevated on the origin and destiny of the race; attempts more or less plausible to tell whence man has come and where he goes—how the present is

related to the past and future—how the lower world is connected with a higher. The historical pessimism of Schopenhauer, although still a novelty in Europe, is confessedly borrowed from Brahminism and Budhism, in both of which its leading principle is an essential dogma. Christianity, like all other religions, contains a theory of history, although only under the form proper to a religion. "There is a little book," says Mr Ripley, "which is taught to children, and on which they are examined in the Church. If we read this book, which is the Catechism, we shall find a solution of all the problems which have been proposed; all of them without exception. If we ask the Christian, whence comes the human race, he knows; or whither it goes, he knows; or how it goes, he knows. If we ask that poor child, who has never reflected on the subject in his life, why he is here below, and what will become of him after death, he will give you a sublime answer, which he will not thoroughly comprehend, but which is none the less admirable for that. If we ask him how the world was created, and for what end; why God has placed in it plants and animals; how the earth was peopled; whether by a single family or by many; why men speak different languages; why they suffer, why they struggle, and how all this will end,—he knows it all. Origin of the world, origin of the species, question of races, destiny of man in this life and in the other, relations of man to God, duties of man to his fellow-men, rights of man over the creation,—he is ignorant of none of these points; and when he shall have grown up, he will as little hesitate with regard to natural right, political right, or the right of nations: all this proceeds with clearness, and as it were of itself, from Christianity."[1]

Philosophy does not assume form and body till long after religion, and it does so at first, wherever there is a great religion, on the basis of the religion, and not on a foundation of its own. India, which is the great philosophical land of Asia, had such a religion, and the philosophy of India never severed itself from its religion. Its chief systems, the six darsanani, are classed as orthodox and heterodox: five of them rest on the Vedas; and although it cannot be said that the Sankhya acknowledges the

[1] Introductory Notice to Jouffroy's Philosophical Essays, p. 23, 24.

authority of any sacred book, it proposes to itself for final aim a religious end, the securing of salvation to man, and recommends the pursuit of truth only as a means to that end. It was otherwise in Greece, the anthropomorphic polytheism of which, although singularly beautiful, being mainly a product of imagination and the æsthetic sense, with no depth of root either in the reason or conscience, with feeble philosophical and moral powers and possibilities, has no claim to be regarded as a great religion, and indeed would seem to have been in some measure outgrown by the Greek mind even when Homer wrote. Hence Greek philosophy from its origin kept itself essentially distinct from Greek mythology, the influence of which upon it at the strongest was only secondary; at a very early date it began not only silently to undermine but openly to assail it as irrational and immoral. It is its characteristic and glory that from first to last it was free and independent, acknowledging subjection to no authority save that of reason alone. This philosophy having fulfilled its providential mission, expired in a struggle with Christianity; the classical world and its wisdom gave place to a new social order and a higher wisdom. A world arose of which Christianity was the central power, the dominant principle, and again for centuries philosophy was rested on theology, as it had been in ancient India. Only slowly, and with difficulty, and in comparatively recent times, has philosophy once more recovered its independence and ceased to be the handmaid or bondwoman of theology. The Hindu darsanas and scholastic philosophies were, then, systems of philosophy based on systems of theology. One consequence was, that in a sense they were as comprehensive as the theologies with which they were connected. Whatever problems the Vedas were supposed to have shed light on, the Hindu philosophers felt emboldened to deal with. Whatever the Church received as doctrine, the scholastic philosophers made it their aim to develop and apply. In the Indian and medieval philosophies there is, accordingly, no lack of historical theory of a sort, as there is no lack of any kind of theory of which the germs could be discovered in the authoritative sources of Brahminism and Christianity. And the Greek philosophies, although not based as these were on religion, none the less attempted to

compass the explanation of the entire universe. They did not, as the philosophies of all moderately prudent men now do, presuppose the positive sciences, but occupied their place. These sciences did not then exist. There was only one vast vague philosophy, at least till Aristotle broke it up to some extent into parts and laid the foundations of certain sciences; and that philosophy, although ever baffled, ever renewed its efforts to explain nothing less than the mystery of all that is. It has to be acknowledged that even in its oldest form, its rude Ionian stage, when assuming water and air and unconditioned matter to be first principles, it did not overlook that the origin of man, the existence of intelligence, and the gradation of intelligence, required to be accounted for no less than the character and arrangement of the material portions of the universe. In the course of its development it perhaps gained few permanent and positive results; but, besides educating the human faculties, it was accompanied by an ever-widening view and ever-deepening sense of the difficulty and magnitude of the problem it sought to solve; man and society, in particular, gradually bulked more prominently before it and commanded a constantly increasing share of attention, until at length Plato from the stand-point of idealism, and Aristotle from that of realism, elaborated those two memorable theories of society which at once summed up the past and represented the great antagonistic movements of political life in the future.[1]

This leads me to remark that there can scarcely be political disquisition without historical speculation. As soon as political thought comes forth into life, it is found to oscillate between two poles—between despotism and anarchy—the extreme of social authority and the extreme of individual independence. Before political thought awakens, social authority predominates. The man as an individual does not exist, but is merged in the family, clan, city, or nation. But in every progressive society there comes a time when its stronger minds feel that they are not merely parts of a social organism, that they have a life and destiny, rights and duties of their own, and simply as men. There are then two principles in the world—the principle of

[1] Appendix A.

authority and the principle of liberty, the principle of society and the principal of individualism. These two principles coexist at first in a few individuals, but in process of time they come not only to coexist in some degree in all, but to manifest themselves apart, and then there are not only two principles in the individual but two parties in the State, the one inclining more to the side of social authority, and the other more towards individual independence—a conservative and a liberal party; each party existing in virtue of its assertion of a truth, but existing only as a party because it does not assert the whole truth —each conferring its special services—each having its special dangers—each being certain to ruin any society in which it succeeds in crushing the other,—but the two securing both order and progress, partly by counteracting each other, and partly by cooperating with each other. Now it is not until these two parties emerge, not until their respective claims come into open conflict, that there is any active political thought, any general political theory; and hence political thought, political speculation at least, is from the very first forced on historical speculation. The problem which is its root, out of which it issues, is no other than this,—What is the relation of the past to the present? What influence ought the past to have over the present, and society over the individual? Where between slavish deference to all that is, and a proud and wilful rejection of it, lies the golden mean at which political wisdom aims? But that problem involves a whole philosophy of history. It was therefore altogether natural that historical reflection should have received in Greece a special stimulus from the Sophists, who effected in philosophy the transition from cosmological to psychological speculation, and who substituted in politics the principle of individualism for that of social authority; whose chief merit was assertion of the rights of the subject, and whose radical error was denial of the rights of the object, both in philosophy and politics. It was altogether natural, also, that the clearest and deepest thinker of the classical world, Aristotle, should have been the man who came nearest being the founder of the philosophy of history. He had, it is true, scarcely a conception of progress, and no conception of any law of progress, but he had studied

closely the constitution of all the Greek States and surrounding peoples; had a full appreciation of the importance of the analysis and comparison of the most varied forms of government, and employed with rare skill and success both processes; had a most remarkable insight into the requirements, composition, working, and influence of every species of polity which had until his time been tried; and, in consequence, singularly correct, profound, and comprehensive conceptions of that social stability or order which is the prime condition of social progress.

The historian is in still closer contact if possible with our science than the politician. The philosophy of history is not a something separate from the facts of history, but a something contained in them. The more a man gets into the meaning of them, the more he gets into it, and it into him; for it is simply the meaning, the rational interpretation, the knowledge of the true nature and essential relations of the facts. And this is true of whatever species or order the facts may be. Their philosophy is not something separate and distinct from, something over and above, their interpretation, but simply their interpretation. He who knows about any people, or epoch, or special development of human nature, how it has come to be what it is and what it tends to, what causes have given it the character it has, and what its relation is to the general development of humanity, has attained to the philosophy of the history of that people, epoch, or development. Philosophical history is sometimes spoken of as a kind of history, but the language is most inaccurate. Every kind of history is philosophical which is true and thorough; which goes closely and deeply enough to work; which shows the what, how, and why of events as far as reason and research can ascertain. History always participates in some measure of philosophy, for events are always connected according to some real or supposed principle either of efficient or final causation. The dullest mind can only describe them on that condition; the most confused mind must have some sort of reason of selection, and any sort of reason followed out will lead to some sort of philosophy. The more the mind of the historian is awake and active, the more, of course, it is impelled to go in search of the connections be-

tween causes and effects, between occurrences and tendencies; but even the most absolute "dry-as-dust" manifests a degree of desire to get below the surface, and generally gets so far below it as to find that some larger causes than mere individual volitions determine the course of events. A man has only to give himself seriously to the study of any portion of history, and he can scarcely fail to discover that it is pervaded by thoughts and forces which determine the nature and form of the opinions and acts even of those who are unconscious of or opposed to their influence; and that discovery logically involves and necessitates the existence or validity of a philosophy of history. It is accordingly natural that history should have surely, although slowly, and, as it were, of itself, led up to the philosophy of history; that it should have in each new epoch of its own development become more philosophical, more conscious of the principles which regulate the succession of human affairs, and at once more comprehensive and definite in the apprehension of their final causes. It may be desirable briefly to show this.

History appears only at a comparatively late period in the progress of a people. It is an error to regard the rude minstrelsy which has everywhere long preceded the use of letters as essentially historical; and for Mr Buckle's extraordinary assertion, that, until corrupted by the discovery of the art of writing, such minstrelsy is "not only founded on truth, but strictly true," there is no shadow of evidence. The lowest form of history is first found among the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Chinese. Differing in many respects, these great monarchies yet had, in the dependence of enormous populations on a central individual will, the existence of a learned class, the concentration of population in vast and crowded cities, and other characteristics and wants of the civil and political life inseparable from every extensive empire of a despotic type, enough in common to account for the antiquity and authenticity of such historical records as they possess, royal genealogies, registers of military expeditions and treaties, lists of tribute, annals or chronicles of various kinds. But the very circumstances which originated history at an early date in these empires determined that it should never

rise above the humblest stage,—the dull, dead form of mere registration. It has never been found to flourish even in the modified despotisms of modern times, and it was impossible that it should develop itself with any vigour on a soil unfertilised by any living springs of national feeling, and in the withering atmosphere of ancient oriental tyranny. Hence even in China it exists only as annals, although no nation can boast of so lengthened and strictly continuous a series of historical writers, since for upwards of 2600 years a tribunal has been established in the capital expressly for the recording of events supposed to be of national importance. History of the kind found in these countries is accordingly both very superficial and very narrow: very superficial, because, occupied only with the outward acts of a few ruling men, and satisfied with the mere statement of certain public events severed from their causes, it makes no attempt to understand the character, the conditions, the social development of the people or nation itself; and very narrow, because, in addition to being thus exclusively conversant with a small class or caste of persons in the nation, and with what affects their interests, it wholly fails to realise that any other nation can have historical significance. India presents us with a far richer and finer literary development than any of the nations now mentioned, its poetry and philosophy in particular being exceedingly remarkable; but the unparalleled mixture of races contained from a remote antiquity within it, the utter want of any extensive political unity, the genius and character of its leading people, and their external and social conditions, were all unfavourable to the use of historical composition, and the Hindus have no ancient native histories. They have known how to give true and full expression to the innermost workings of their minds, they have faithfully delineated all the features of their character, in the Vedas, the Code of Manu, the Pouranas, the Soutras of their philosophers, and especially in their two great national epics; but they have neglected and despised the events of their outer and social life, and allowed the memory of them to be to all appearance hopelessly lost. Nothing seems less promising than the attempt to separate historical fact from poetical fiction in the Rámáyana and Mahá-Bhárata, either

according to Professor Lassen's ingenious process of symbolism and interpretation, or Mr Wheeler's naively simple process of selection and reduction.

The national histories of the Hebrews must be allowed to be incomparably superior to those of any other Asiatic people. Leaving aside as irrelevant here the question of their inspiration, no impartial critic can refuse to acknowledge that they are exalted above all previous compositions of an historical nature alike by the rare merits of their contents and form. The profound sense of a supernatural presence which pervades them is combined with the clearest insight into human nature, so that man appears nowhere more man than where God is represented as miraculously by his side. They are written in general with such simplicity, naturalness, and life, often with such a pathos and sublimity, that they must continue for all time to be the books through which the historical sense can be most surely and energetically elicited. History has been defined as the biography of nations; but the Jewish histories so delineate the various stages and fortunes through which from its origin onwards "the peculiar people" passed, that they may not unfitly be compared to the successive chapters of an autobiography. The feeling of their own national significance, which the Jews possessed in so singular a degree, and which they so carefully cherished, was grounded on their history, which had consequently the most vital interest for them. Probably no people has ever been more thoroughly conscious of being rooted in, and of growing out of, a marvellous past. And this historical self-consciousness was accompanied with a sense of relationship to other peoples such as had not been previously displayed. The national exclusiveness of the Jews, as compared with European peoples, either ancient or modern, is an undoubted fact; but it should not conceal this other fact, that it is among them that the convictions of the unity of the race, of the filiation of all the peoples of the world, and of a common and hopeful final destiny, are first found prevailing—and that it is among them, on the basis of these convictions, that history first rises from particular to universal. We have, it is true, the history of the Jews, as of a nation under a special discipline and with a special mission,

minutely narrated, but it is shown to be only an offshoot of the history of humanity; and if the Jews thought the twig greater than the tree, or if Christian writers have spoken as if they thought so, the original historians are not to blame. But history as it is in the Bible is not history in a pure form, but something very much more than history. It exists not for its own sake, but for the sake of something higher, of which it is represented as merely the medium and manifestation. It may thus be said to be, as history, a stage of transition from lower to higher, which in no degree interrupts the progress or violates the order of development in this kind of composition, although otherwise incomparable with any writing of merely human fame. It contained what was far more precious than anything Greece possessed; and yet, looked at from another side, fell short of, and only led up to, history as we find it among the Greeks, who in this, as in so many other provinces of intellectual activity, asserted an unmistakable pre-eminence, an unparalleled originality.

On the classic soil of ancient Hellas history first attained the dignity of an independent art, first was cultivated for its own sake. It is what the Lord said and the Lord did that Scripture history chiefly aims to exhibit—it is His guidance of a particular nation in an essentially special way that is its subject—whereas the historians of Greece set before themselves for end simply the satisfaction of man's curiosity about the actions of his fellow-men. "These are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus which he publishes, in order to preserve from decay the remembrance of what men have done, and to prevent the great and marvellous actions of the Greeks and barbarians losing their due meed of glory, as well as to state the causes of their hostility." "Thucydides of Athens wrote the history of the war between the Athenians and Peloponnesians while it was going on, having begun to write from its commencement in the belief that it would turn out great, and worthier of being recorded than any which had preceded it." The oriental world had no histories written from these simple natural motives, which are, however, those distinctively appropriate to the historical art. That art, therefore, as its own true self—as a free and separate form of literature, and not the mere appendage or offshoot of something else—first

grew out of the soil of Greek culture, and after a period of bareness and dryness blossomed and ripened into the immortal works of Herodotus and Thucydides. There it attained a perfection of form which has perhaps never since been surpassed. Herodotus, with all his credulity and want of criticism, is, through the wonderful fulness and perennial freshness of his information —through his transparent candour and simplicity of spirit, his ease of narration, vividness of portraiture, pathos and humour —the very type and model of one great class of historians; and Thucydides, by his accuracy of investigation, intense realisation and austerely graphic representation of events, and especially by his deep insight into the working of political causes and social forces, of another. Further, that remarkable many-sidedness which characterised the Greek genius, which showed itself at the very origin of Greek literature in Homer in a form which could not be again surpassed, revealed itself in this sphere also, worthily repeating itself in the Father of History to gratify the boundless curiosity of the most inquisitive and philosophical of nations. So it was natural that it should be a Greek who first tried to realise the idea of a universal history, although it could not be even the most comprehensive-minded Greek of the age of Herodotus or Thucydides when there was no visible unity of any kind in the world, but one who had the spectacle of Rome before his eyes, and who had studied her steady march towards universal empire as far at least as the period when "the affairs of Italy and Africa conjoined with those of Asia and Greece, and all moved together towards one fixed and single point."[1] Polybius, who spent a portion of his life at Rome—who studied her history closely and saw clearly that her success was no accident but the natural result of general causes, her unity, institutions, and character—who beheld her triumph over Carthage and Macedonia, and was fully conscious that his own divided and demoralised land could offer her no resistance—was a Greek so placed, and he was the first to attempt a universal history. He did so with the distinctest perception of its advantages over particular histories, which, he tells us, "can no more convey a perfect view and

[1] Polybius, B. I. c. 1.

knowledge of the whole, than a survey of the divided members of a body once endued with life and beauty can yield a just conception of all the comeliness and vigour which it has received from nature."

The idea of a universal history was, then, the reflection and result of the universal empire of Rome, which made the known world externally one, a single great political whole. Rome made the world Roman and became herself cosmopolitan. The enervated generations of her decadence were citizens of the world, universal philanthropists, in mere thought and feeling; and her fate should be an eternal warning how little grand ideas and fine sentiments may do for the life either of a nation or of those who entertain them. The fault lay, however, not in the ideas or sentiments themselves, which are the richest part of the heritage Rome bequeathed the world; which have not died, and never will; which the life of society is even now a struggle to realise. The indebtedness of history to Rome, as exemplifying that unity of a universal government without which there could have arisen no notion of a universal history, is incalculable. The world has known external unity only in and through Rome, for the universal empire of Pagan Rome was the condition and foundation of the universal empire of Catholic Rome, and of that strange, changeful, phantom-like, yet most needful and influential existence, the Holy Roman Empire—the condition and foundation, in a word, of that Church and of that State which served to prepare a spiritual unity yet unrealised, the thought of which now possesses many hearts, but would never have been conceived had external unity not previously existed, and had not a present type and a venerable tradition of such a unity saved human society in medieval times from dissolution into individual units, isolated atoms. But I must not forget further to remark, that the men who founded Rome's greatness, who won for her by endurance and daring the empire of the world, were not men of broad but of narrow ideas, not of liberal but of exclusive feelings, men animated by a proud, absorbing, ruthless patriotism. It was through the strength of their national feeling that the Romans gained that universal empire in which they lost it; and as a general rule, when the classical scholar thinks

of Roman history, it is not as leading to even an imperfect recognition of human brotherhood, to a sense of something generic in man, of a common nature in virtue of which all men are entitled to certain legal and moral rights, but as displaying the features of a national character of singular strength and interest. And certainly in that respect the Roman historians have a very special claim on our attention. The Greeks were not patriotic in the same sense and degree as the Romans, and Herodotus and Thucydides are not national historians in the same sense and degree as Livy and Tacitus: indeed Livy and Tacitus,—the former narrating the events of Rome's career of heroic struggle and achievement with the colouring and in the tone most adapted to inspire the youth of his own generation with reverence and emulation of their ancestors; and the latter delineating, with the tragic pathos of a despairing patriot and the righteous indignation of an honest man, the growth of social corruption from the time of Tiberius onwards, to deter those in whom any sense of moral obligation was left from what had involved a people so strong and virtuous, so glorious and free, as the Roman, in such misery and disgrace, such revolting vice and abject slavery,—might with little exaggeration be described as the two first national historians on a large and prominent scale, and who, it may be added, had as such no worthy successors for sixteen hundred years, and are still unsurpassed.

Rome led on to an outward, compulsory, political unity, and prepared the way for the free and spiritual unity of true human brotherhood through divine sonship in Jesus Christ. With the new view of the divine nature disclosed by the Gospel there was inseparably associated a new view of human nature. In the fuller knowledge of God, man knew himself better, and in the fuller knowledge of himself he knew God better. He became conscious as he had never been before that he was a spiritual as well as a political being, and even more a spiritual than a political being; that spiritual life was the most important form and ultimate root of all life. He ceased to regard religion as a product of feeling or imagination, as a work of art, an instrument of policy, or a speculation in philosophy, and began to realise that it was an actual power and life, a kingdom

with laws demanding order and obedience more imperatively than those of any secular state or empire. As art was the dominant fact in Greek life, positive law or policy in Roman life, so was religion in medieval life; and hence literature in all its branches became prevailingly religious, and religious in the specially medieval, that is, ecclesiastical form. Thus, ecclesiastical histories — those of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomenus, Theodoret, Rufinus, Sulpicius Severus, Gregory of Tours, the Venerable Bede, and Adam of Bremen, may be referred to as examples of the class—outnumbered all other histories; biographies of saints, bishops, and popes, histories of single convents and monastic orders, &c., abounded; and even general or political histories were with few exceptions written by ecclesiastics and on ecclesiastical principles. Now, although as regards literary excellence the very best of medieval historians are unworthy to be mentioned in comparison with those of Greece and Rome, no loss of this kind—no loss, however great, in beauty of form—should conceal from us the enormous material gain involved in the very existence of ecclesiastical history, and the recognition of its importance as an element in general history. That was more to history than the discovery of America to geography. It was the opening up of a central and exhaustless vein in the mine of human nature,—the entrance into a main stream in the movement of human affairs.

Christianity further introduced the great idea that the course of history is the unfolding of a divine plan; that kingdoms have risen and fallen in order that a purpose of God regarding man might be realised. It thus showed that the thought of a universal empire like that of Rome, instead of being the most comprehensive to which the human mind could reach, was in reality a narrow and partial one, since Rome even at its best must have existed for something beyond itself, for something towards the attainment of which it and all nations were only means or stages. It gave a previously unknown significance and extension to the doctrine of Providence, teaching not only that God cared for men as individuals, but so directed them by His power and wisdom as a race, as to bring about the end which He had in their creation. It forced on the mind of the Christian the

conviction of a unity pervading history in consequence of all events having been foreordained and being related to a final cause, the chief end of man. It thus not only made a kind of philosophy of history possible, which it had never been before, but necessary; and the general features of such a philosophy can be traced, more or less distinctly, dispersed through the mass of early Christian literature, while they present themselves with special clearness and in close connection in the 'De Civitate Dei' of St Augustine. That great work is not, as Ozanam and others have said, a philosophy of history, nor even an attempt at a philosophy of history; it is properly neither philosophical nor historical, but theological,—a polemic against Paganism and an apology for Christianity of remarkable breadth and elevation of design, of remarkable vigour and skill of execution. It contains, however, a nearer approximation to a philosophy of history than will be found in any other patristic or scholastic treatise, and a statement of the characteristic principles of the historical theory comprehended in it may here be reasonably demanded.

They may, perhaps, be thus concisely set forth. (1.) The human race was created less than six thousand years before the capture of Rome by the Goths. All documents which assign to it a greater antiquity than the Biblical records (as interpreted on this point by the Eusebian chronology) are mendacious; and all the theories which, like that of Apuleius, represent men as having always been, or which, like that of some of the Stoics, affirm the perpetual revolution of all things in cycles which bring men with the rest of the world round again to the same order and form as at first, are foolish. Why men were not created sooner, is an inconsiderate question, which might be put with the same relevancy and force no matter when they were created (lib. xii. cap. 10-20).

(2.) The human race is a single species; all its members are descended from one man, and therefore bound together not only by similarity of nature but by ties of kinship. In that one first man the whole race was comprehended, and in him God foresaw what portion of it was to live according to the Spirit, and obtain eternal life, and what to live accord-

ing to the flesh, and incur eternal condemnation (xii. 21 et 27).

(3.) God, who has everywhere impressed on nature regularity, beauty, and order—who has done everything in the physical world according to number, weight, and measure—who has left not even the entrails of the smallest and meanest living creature, the feather of a bird, or the little flower of a plant, or the leaf of a tree, without its exquisite harmony of parts—cannot have left the course of human affairs, the growth and decay of nations, their victories and defeats, unregulated by the laws of His Providence.[1] The vicissitudes of empires can have their reason neither in *chance—i.e.*, the absence of a cause, or the action of causes which operate in no intelligible order—nor in *fate*, if by fate be meant what happens of necessity independently of the will of God, but only in that will itself, in a divinely foreordained plan embracing all things and times, yet not inconsistent with men doing freely whatever they feel to be done by them simply because they will it (v. 1, 8-11).

(4.) The human race, naturally one, had its unity broken by the fall or sin of Adam, from whom have issued in consequence two kinds of men, two societies, two great cities; the one ruled by self-will and self-love, the other by the love of God and man—the one subject to condemnation and destined to eternal misery, the other under grace and certain of eternal felicity. Outwardly, visibly, bodily, these two societies or cities of men may be confounded; but inwardly, really, and spiritually, they are essentially and eternally distinct and hostile. No other division of men can compare in importance with this; and to it all other divisions, whether based on distinctions of speech, race, or government, must be subordinated (xiv. 1, 28; xv. 1).

(5.) Man has been endowed with a marvellous capacity of progress, and his genius, partly under the stimulus of necessity, partly from its own inherent inventiveness, has devised and elaborated countless arts; has made amazing advances in weaving and building, agriculture and navigation, in pottery, painting, and sculpture, in the means of destruction and the appli-

[1] The beautiful passage (v. 11) partially translated in the above sentence must, I think, have suggested another equally beautiful in Herder's Preface to the 'Ideen.'

ances of healing, in exciting and satisfying appetite, in the communication of thoughts and feelings, in music and musical instruments, in measuring and numbering, in the knowledge of the stars and of the rest of nature, and in philosophical subtlety (xxii. 24, sec. 3).

(6.) Like the education of an individual, that of the race, as represented by the people of God, has advanced through certain epochs or ages, in order that the human mind might gradually rise from temporal to eternal, from visible to invisible things (x. 14). Augustine has made great use of this idea that the development of humanity is analogous to that of the individual, while at the same time aware that the comparison or parallelism was not absolutely exact. Indeed he has in several of his works distinctly pointed out one important respect in which it fails—viz., that while age in the individual is weakness, in humanity it is perfection. He less distinctly felt, although not quite unconscious of it, that different periods may coexist in the development of the race, while they must necessarily be successive in that of the individual.

(7.) The epochs of history are sometimes regarded by Augustine as two, sometimes as three, and sometimes as six. The two-fold division is that into history before and history after Christ, the time of preparation for the Gospel and the time of its diffusion and triumph. The three-fold division is into the youth, manhood, and old age of humanity, or the reigns of nature, law, and grace. And the six-fold division is essentially a further application of the principle which underlies the three-fold division, although also referred to a fanciful analogy between the epochs of history and the days of creation, which has often been reproduced since by writers who have allowed imagination to master reason. The epoch of youth is characterised by the absence of law, and comprehends the two periods of infancy and boyhood. In the first, which extends from Adam to Noah, man is absorbed in the satisfaction of his physical wants, and soon forgets whatever happens to him; in the second, which extends from Noah to Abraham, the division of languages takes place, and memory begins to be exercised in recalling and retaining the past. The manhood of the race or reign of law

extends from Abraham to Christ. It is marked by the growth of reason and of the sense of sin. The spirit struggles with the evil in the world and through defeat is made conscious of its weakness and depravity. This epoch may be regarded as embracing three periods: the first reaching from Abraham to David; the second from David to the Babylonian captivity; and the third coming down to the birth of Christ. In the course of it flourished the two great heathen empires of Assyria and Rome, of which all other heathen kingdoms may be viewed as appendages. The old age of humanity or reign of grace is the whole Christian era. It is the time in which the Church is enabled through the power of the Spirit to conquer the world, and will last until the victory is complete and the saints inherit the earth in eternal blessedness. No less than five books of the 'De Civitate Dei' (xv.-xix) are devoted to trace through these various epochs of time the growth and progress of humanity in its two great divisions, or, in other words, the fortunes of the heavenly and earthly cities: but, although full of theological interest, there will be found no signs in them of the presence of either the spirit or the method of historical science; indeed, they consist mainly of comments and conjectures on the Biblical narrative. The earthly city and its history get little attention and still less justice. The history of the heavenly city itself, although discoursed of in these books at great length, is not divided into an orderly series of periods or stages of development. The division which I have just described can, at the most, be only said to be implied in the exposition given in the 'De Civitate Dei.' Its explicit statement, the definite limiting and characterising of the periods, I have had to take from a much earlier work, the 'De Genesi contra Manichæos' (i. 23).

(8.) Another theorem of St Augustine is, that although out of the city of God or apart from true religion there can be no true virtue, although all that is not of faith is sin, and the natural virtues of heathen peoples must, in consequence, be only apparent virtues, still such virtues may merit and receive increase of dominion and other temporal rewards, as well as serve as incentives and examples to Christians. Of this the grand proof in

his eyes was Rome; and he has insisted with singular eloquence that the ancient Romans deserved for their industry, moderation, freedom from luxury and licentiousness, skill in government, and even desire of glory—since that, although a vice in itself, restrained many greater vices—to be raised to the height of power which they reached; and that the heroic deeds of Brutus and Torquatus, of Camillus, Mucius, and Cincinnatus, the Decii, Pulvillus, and Regulus, might well humble even the most devoted of the followers of Jesus (vi. c. 12-20).

(9.) The city of God which has from the first grown up alongside of the kingdoms of this world will outlast them all; and although they have often despised and oppressed it, will appear invested with immortal beauty and honour when their glories have been extinguished for ever. Immutable and invincible amidst all the instability, agitation, and strife of human things, it is continually drawing into itself its predestined number of inhabitants out of all nations, tribes, and peoples. When the unknown hour arrives which sees their number completed, the last of the elect passed from the city of the world into that of God, then cometh Christ to judge the quick and the dead, and finally to separate the good from the evil; and at His word, above the ruins of those cities of the world that have passed away into the darkness of their eternal doom, there rises, in the light of God's love, on a new and purified earth, a new, peaceful, and perfectly happy city, which is imperishable, and which contains all the truly good men who have ever lived (xix-xxii).

These are the leading propositions of what we may call in a lax and general way the Augustinian philosophy of history, which was substantially the only one known in medieval Europe,[1] and

[1] The Spanish presbyter, Paulus Orosius, wrote his 'Historiarum libri vii. adversus paganos' at the suggestion of Augustine, and in reply to the same charges against Christianity and Christians which are combated in the 'De Civitate Dei.' The chief merit of the work is its endeavour after comprehensiveness. It gives a history of the world from the creation down to the year A.D. 416. The polemical and practical purpose to which it owed its origin is never lost sight of; and so it abounds in denunciation of ambition, conquest, idolatry, &c., in moral advices and Christian consolation. It adds nothing, so far as I can perceive, to the thought of Augustine, to the historical theory which I have expounded in the text. M. Ozanam finds in the history of Orosius "un véritable talent, quelque-

which has reappeared in modern times with more or less important modifications under the hands of Bossuet, Schlegel, and many others. There are still those who accept it as the only philosophy of history possible or desirable; but the vast majority of thoughtful minds are now probably in greater danger of overlooking than of overestimating its worth in any other than a religious reference. Its defects are numerous and obvious. It subordinates all things to the Church in a false and misleading way, depreciates and degrades secular life, takes no account at all of many an important people, and of the very greatest of those which it condescends to notice gives most superficial and partial views. Its assertion of the existence, power, and wisdom of the First Providential Cause, although admirable in itself, is unsupported by adequate proof, that being only attainable by the investigation of secondary causes, which are neglected. It virtually identifies the history of a special people, the Jewish, as recorded for a special purpose in the canonical books of Scripture, with the history of humanity, so far as recoverable from any kind of genuine monument or memorial by any kind of sound research. Still, with all its defects it was a vast improvement on previous doctrines, or rather on the previous want of a doctrine. The ultimate and greatest triumph of historical philosophy will really be neither more nor less than the full proof of providence, the discovery by the processes of scientific method of the divine plan which unites and harmonises the apparent chaos of human actions contained in history into a cosmos; and the first attempts, however feeble, to trace such a plan, marked the dawn of a new era of thought. Almost the one respect, certainly the chief respect, in which medieval historiography is superior to classical is, that it is pervaded by a doctrine of universal and particular providence, the principles of which, drawn from Scripture, are eternally true, whatever mistakes may be made in applying them. And no medieval chronicler,

fois ce souffle inspiré du génie espagnol;" and, although I cannot say I do, he may very possibly be right. I must decidedly protest, however, against Herr Doergens (Aristoteles, p. 12) designating him—"der erste Philosoph der Geschichte." No one has a right to distribute blue ribbons in such a way. Great titles ought to be conferred only on great men and for great services. Orosius was no historical philosopher at all—no philosopher of any kind.

however dull and dry, is wholly devoid of this merit; not one, however insignificant, quite overlooks the relation of the events he records to the history of the world as a divinely ordered system. It is, no doubt, in several aspects very ludicrous to find the annalist of a town or monastery begin his narrative at the creation or deluge; but the man who can perceive even in that merely what is ludicrous, and no evidence of a *naïve* faith in a great truth unknown to Thucydides or Tacitus, is too shallow and narrow-minded to be entitled to laugh at any person or thing.

But medieval Europe was extremely ignorant alike of the facts, the methods, and ideas which an adequate philosophy of history presupposes, and only slowly could the ignorance be dispelled and replaced by the knowledge demanded. There was, I say, in the middle ages a want of the necessary facts, and a want of knowledge of what facts there were. Sciences differ greatly from one another as to the number of facts which they require for a foundation, as to the number of observations they must have to start from. In some, the phenomena are comparatively simple and obviously bound together by laws productive of order and harmony; in others the phenomena are comparatively complex, and the connections among them exceedingly latent, abstruse, difficult to trace. Astronomy is a science of the former kind—geology of the latter; and that is one reason, and not the least powerful reason, why the one is so ancient and the other so recent. But no science has facts so complex, so diverse, so mobile, so intermingled to deal with as that of human history,—manifestly, none needs the same multiplicity of observations, so extensive and varied a range of experience. Confine the mind within any narrow sphere, and in vain will it try to discern the principles which pervade it and connect it with others; lay before it only the events of a few generations or nations, and in vain will it strive to reduce them under law; "it must," to use the words of M. Cousin, "see many empires, many religions, many systems, appear and disappear, before it can ascend to the general laws which regulate the rise and fall of human things; it must survive many revolutions, and must go through much disorder, before it can compre-

hend that above and around all there is a beautiful and beneficent order." But how narrow was the range of experience and real information accessible to the medieval historian! Till the East and West came into contact through invasions and crusades, commerce and pilgrimages, little was known in Europe of the oriental world beyond what was stated in the Bible. The knowledge even of Roman history was for a long time in danger of being lost, and was preserved mainly through the growth of those practical interests which necessitated the study of Roman law. The knowledge of Greek history was virtually lost till the great revolution known as the the Revival of Letters took place. Although almost all possible elements and forms of social life lay around the men who lived in the age of anarchy, which was the immediate consequence of the victory of the barbarians over the Romans, they were so intermingled and undeveloped that any adequate insight into their real natures and issues was impossible. The sphere of historical knowledge thus narrow was only capable of being enlarged by a long series of events in history itself, by the rise and progress of arts and sciences, of forms of government and nations, by changes of creed and habits, by manifold inquiries and discoveries, suggesting or succeeding one another in an order determined by nature and reason.

The medieval mind was, further, most incapable of dealing rightly with the historical facts which were accessible to it. The primary requisite of history is, of course, that it be a true record of events, the statement only of what happened, the accurate statement of what happened. But that supposes the existence and exercise of qualities in which the medieval historian was specially and singularly deficient,—the power of truthful observation, the habit of weighing and sifting evidence, the ability to throw off prejudice and lay the mind open to receive the real stamp and impression of the actual occurrences. He was, on the contrary, in the highest degree credulous, uncritical, and prejudiced. Ignorant of his ignorance, ignorant of what knowledge was, he readily accepted fictions as facts, and believed as unquestionable a crowd of legends regarding Greece and Rome, and even the States that had risen on the ruins of Rome, which made everything like a correct notion of the course of human

development impossible; and, imbued with the spirit of his age, he looked at all events through an ecclesiastical and dogmatic medium, which effectually precluded him from fairly estimating secular, and, still more, heathen life. I do not need to dwell on the proof of this, or to show how through the concurrent action of many causes the spirit of inquiry grew up and spread, how the fetters of theological dogmatism were gradually broken, and the prejudices which had riveted them on gradually rooted out, as that is just the general task which three able and celebrated writers have recently applied themselves to accomplish—viz., Lecky in his 'History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe;' Draper in his 'Intellectual Development of Europe;' and Mazzarella in his 'Storia della Critica;' while, as regards the very department of study under our consideration, Mr Buckle has collected in the sixth chapter of the first volume of his 'History of Civilisation in England,' examples of the credulity of medieval chroniclers abundantly numerous for conviction, although they might easily be multiplied to any extent, and has proved in its thirteenth chapter that the free and impartial criticism of testimony failed to penetrate even into French historiography before the seventeenth century. But the correct ascertainment of the facts is merely the first and simplest function of method; the inductive use of the facts is a more difficult one, and necessarily later in appearing. It was impossible that the processes of induction could be successfully applied to historical materials before the mind had become accustomed to deal truthfully and independently with these materials as individual phenomena, and to employ these processes in the various departments of physical science where their employment is so much simpler. It is chiefly through the growth of physical science that the notion of law in human development has arisen, and chiefly through it also that the path which leads to the discovery of law has been opened up. Not till long after induction was familiar to physicists, not till long after Lord Bacon had traced its general theory, was it, or could it be, practised to any extent in historical research; only since the eighteenth century, in fact, can historians be found occupying themselves with the remote causes

of events, with general social tendencies, with principles of intellectual and political development which circumscribe and dominate individual wills. The historians of antiquity aimed at describing events in a truthful, agreeable, and morally and politically profitable manner; their highest ambition was the composition of works beautiful in form and practically edifying in contents; and they succeeded to admiration: but even the profoundest among them made no attempt to go farther back along the lines of causation than to the motives of the actors engaged, or the direct influences of certain social institutions. The middle ages were giving place to the modern era before the search for causes was carried even thus far by later historians. Mr Hallam is, I believe, correct in saying that Philip de Commines "is the first modern writer who in any degree has displayed sagacity in reasoning on the characters of men and the consequences of their actions, or who has been able to generalise his observations by comparison and reflection." He was certainly surpassed, however, both in power of analysis and generalisation, by his Italian contemporary, Machiavelli; and yet even this great writer,—although he shows in his 'Discorsi sopra la prima deca di T. Livio' a singular clearness and keenness of insight into the proximate causes, both political and psychological, of events, and a singular power of reasoning from particulars to particulars, from ancient to modern actions and institutions,—neglects remote causes, and rests content with analogies instead of laws—analogies which he has often exaggerated and overstrained in order to convert them into practical lessons for immediate application. Vico and Montesquieu were the morning stars of a brighter and broader day, the light of which is now reflected from the pages of almost all historians of recognised ability, not excluding even those who speak most disparagingly of everything of the nature of historical science or philosophy. None of our contemporaries, for example, is less tolerant of "histories of the philosophical sort" than Mr Carlyle, and few of them more under the sway of ideas of "eternal melodies," "silences," "immensities," "veracities," &c., which are probably just what writers of less vehement natures mean by the perhaps cold and colourless names of causes and laws. No

historian of superior mind can now, even if he would, look at events in the same confined and isolated way as the ancients. Individual actions and actors are no longer the exclusive or principal subjects of history; humanity itself, or at least a generation or nation itself, is the great subject, the chief actor, by the side of which even an Alexander, a Cæsar, a Charlemagne, a Napoleon, plays only a secondary and subordinate *rôle:* if by chance an author in a hero-worshipping mood represent, let us suppose, the English Revolution as a *Cromwelliad*, we are sure to find he does not in the least mean what he says, that he really means just the reverse of what he says—that his true thought is, Cromwell was the product, instrument, representative of Puritanism, and great in its strength and as its servant; individual actions and actors, in a word, are felt to derive their main interest from their connection with the collective life of man, the movements of which are determined by forces which manifest themselves more or less in individual events and persons, but extend far beyond, behind, and beneath them. Thus a Grote and Curtius, a Niebuhr and Mommsen, cast over the events even of Greek and Roman history a kind of light not to be found in Herodotus and Thucydides, Livy and Polybius, and which is essentially scientific in character, because due to the knowledge of laws and causes discoverable neither by the mere observation of events nor insight into the motives of individuals, but only by an elaborate use of the processes and resources of the inductive method. That a practical belief in scientific law and method is the distinctive characteristic of the representative historians of the nineteenth century will, I think, be seriously questioned by no competently informed person;[1] and, if acknowledged, I may perhaps have said enough to establish my thesis that historical art has been spontaneously and surely, although slowly, leading up to historical science.

The growth of history towards a scientific stage has been partly the consequence and partly the cause of the growth of certain ideas, without a firm and comprehensive grasp of which no philosophical study or conception of history is possible. It

[1] For a good general statement of the evidence for this proposition, see Vacherot's 'La Science et la Conscience,' ch. iii.

seems necessary briefly to indicate what the history of two of the more important of these ideas has been to the period when our account of the development of the philosophy of history begins: beyond that period there is no need at present to go, as their later history is included in that of the philosophy o history itself. By ideas I do not here mean anything mysterious or metaphysical, but only general thoughts which connect and render intelligible a certain number of facts. There must be general thoughts, there must be appropriate ideas, before fact are intelligible. This is in no real contradiction to the obvious truth that thoughts are only general in virtue of being thoughts of so many facts; that ideas are only appropriate in virtue of being appropriate to the facts. Professor Roscher of Leipsig, a distinguished classical scholar, a still more distinguished political economist, points out in his work on Thucydides how that great historian's usual explanation of things amounts to this—A is the cause of B, and B is the cause of A. But it is more or less so with all great historians. It is only narrow and meagre pragmatical historians, or rather historical logicians, who affirm rigidly and invariably that A is the cause of B, B of C, and C of D, &c. Wherever there is an organism, like a living body, the mind of man, or even a society—wherever there is correlation of parts and functions—wherever there is action and reaction, the single linear series of causes and effects is not found. A is the cause of B and B of A, inconsistent as it may seem to be, is then often a truer formula than A is the cause of B and B of C, consistent as it may seem to be. The case in hand is an instance. Without facts no ideas. Without ideas virtually no facts; nothing that is a fact for thought; nothing that the mind can make any use of.

One of the most important of the ideas I refer to is that of progress. The philosophy of history deals not exclusively but to a great extent with laws of progress, with laws of evolution, and until the idea of progress was firmly and clearly apprehended, little could be done in it. Now, the history of that idea is nearly as follows. In the oriental world it was unknown, or denied, or apprehended only in an exceedingly limited degree. The common assertion that the diametrically

opposite idea of deterioration, the belief that the course of human affairs had been from good to bad and from bad to worse, pervaded all ancient Asiatic thought, whether religious or political, is undoubtedly an exaggeration; the safe affirmation is that a definite general view of history was seldom formed, and, where formed, was very rarely indeed, if ever, that of a progressive development. It was not to be expected that such an idea should originate and prevail in China; for although no one who has had interest enough in that singular nation to study the researches and translations of Remusat, Pauthier, Julien, Neumann, Legge, Plath, and others, will hesitate to dismiss as erroneous the commonplace that it has been an unprogressive nation; although the development and filiation of thought is scarcely less traceable in the history and literature of China than of Greece; and although genuine Chinese historiography, unperverted and uncorrupted by the mythological fictions of Budhism, makes no extravagant pretensions either as to the antiquity or dignity of the national origin, but, with rare honesty and sobriety of judgment goes back to the small and barbarous horde in the forests and mountains of Shensee, which Footsoushe began to reduce to settled order rather more than three thousand years before the Christian era,—yet development has been for very long slower perhaps in China than anywhere else, periods of decadence more numerous, reverence for the past stronger and more diffused, contempt for foreign peoples more common and confirmed, while the power of generalisation, the ability to take comprehensive views, is just the quality in which the Chinese mind, in many respects admirably endowed, is most deficient. In India—where human existence was regarded as a mere stage in the course of transmigration, where the sense of the evil and transitoriness of life has for ages had an intensity and depth the European mind can perhaps hardly realise—in India, the home of pantheism, fatalism, and caste, the thought of social progress and its inspiring hopes could never possess the heart; instead there was the mythical dream of vast chronological cycles, each divisible into four epochs, which are the stages through which the universe and its inhabitants must pass from perfection to destruction, from strength and innocence

to weakness and depravity, until a new mahá-yuga begins.[1] The old Ormazd religion gave expression to the hope that evil would not last for ever, that the Power of darkness would cease on some predestined day to struggle with his righteous adversary, and bow to his authority, and will nor work wickedness any more;[2] but it did so only fitfully and feebly, sometimes suggesting the opposite, and never connecting with the hope of the final victory of goodness any doctrine of gradual progress. Judaism was of its very nature a religion of the future, a religion of hope; expectation was throughout its attitude; it in all its parts pointed forward beyond itself; from generation to generation its voice was that of one crying, Prepare: still, there is no evidence of the ancient Jews having attained to a conscious apprehension of the idea of progress, and no distinct enunciation of that idea, I think, in the Old Testament.

It is often said, and even by those who ought to know much better, that the Greeks and Romans conceived of the course of history only as a downward movement, whereas, in fact, they conceived of it in all ways—*i.e.*, as a process of deterioration, a progress, and a cycle, although in none profoundly or consistently. The natural illusion of the individual that the days of his boyhood were brighter and better than those of his maturity, is also an illusion natural to the race, natural to nations, one which many circumstances seem to confirm, one which can only be adequately corrected by such a survey of bygone generations as antiquity had not the power to make: and the thought of a deterioration of human life from age to age certainly often meets us in the literatures of Greece and Rome; but the obtrusively manifest fact that the origins of all things, the origins of which were in any measure known, were small and feeble, the knowledge of the existence of various rude and savage peoples, the abundant evidences which a Greek of the

[1] The Hindu theory of cycles has, however, various forms. But as the observation of history seems to have had almost nothing to do with its formation, I content myself with referring any one who feels an interest in it to the articles of M. A. Remusat in the 'Journal des Savants,' for Oct., Nov., and Dec. 1831. On the theory of cycles among the ancient nations generally, see the learned and curious discussion in P. Leroux—De l'Humanité, t. ii. ch. viii.

[2] Yaçna., 30, 31, 47.

age of Pericles or a Roman of the age of Augustus possessed of the civilisation he enjoyed having been evolved out of a comparatively barbarous social state, suggested also to many thoughtful minds of the classical world the notion of progress; and the circular movements of the stars, the cycle of changes through which the lives of all plants and animals pass from birth to death, and fatalistic and pantheistic principles, led to the inference that the events of human history fall into circuits, which resemble or repeat one another. It is necessary to establish this by indicating the most interesting and decisive proof-passages. Through the 'Works and Days' of Hesiod there breathes the feeling that the youth and glory of the world has passed away; that man has fallen; that the race is not what it was; that existence, once easy, innocent, joyous, has become difficult, pervaded by evil, full of woes. And this change for the worse, or "fall," is explained by two myths, which seem inconsistent with each other; the one, perhaps of Semitic origin, introduced into Greece through Phœnicia, tracing the toils and miseries of life to the box of Pandora and Prometheus's theft of fire from heaven;[1] while the other, which is widely diffused among the Aryan peoples, refers them to the gradual degeneration of the human species through a series of ages.[2] As to the latter myth, it is to be remarked that the ages are, according to Hesiod, the golden, the silver, the brazen, the heroic, and the iron, so that the process of deterioration is represented as not quite continuous, there being an age, named after no metal, better than that which preceded it, and thus an exception to what is otherwise the rule.[3] Anaximander, one of the earliest of Greek philosophers, working out his idea of the Infinite or Unconditioned being the first principle of the universe, arrived

[1] Εργα και Ημεραι, 42-105. [2] Ibid., 109-201.

[3] The most obvious and probably the true explanation of the exception is, that the heroic age could not, consistently with the traditions which represented the heroes as the founders of Greek families and cities, be fitted harmoniously into the series represented by metals, because it could not be placed elsewhere than immediately before the age of ordinary mortals. Goettling would so interpret the text of Hesiod as to make it an expression of belief in the theory of cycles, but his interpretation seems to have nothing to recommend it except ingenuity in error.

both at a sort of rude nebular hypothesis and a sort of rude development hypothesis. From the απειρον, or primitive unconditioned matter, through an inherent and eternal energy and movement the two original contraries of heat and cold separate; what is cold settles down to the centre and so forms the earth, what is hot ascends to the circumference and so originates the bright, shining, fiery bodies of heaven, which are but the fragments of what once existed as a complete shell or sphere, but in time burst and broke up and so gave rise to the stars. The action of the sun's heat on the watery earth next generated films or bladders out of which came different kinds of imperfectly organised beings, which were gradually developed into the animals which now live. Man's ancestors were fishlike creatures which dwelt in muddy waters, and only, as the sun slowly dried up the earth, became gradually fitted for life on dry land.[1] A similar view was held by the poet, priest, prophet, and philosopher Empedocles. He taught that out of the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water, and under the moving power of Love resisting Hate, plants, animals, and man were in succession, and after many an effort and many a futile conjunction of organs, generated and elaborated into their present shapes.[2] This kind and measure of belief in progress did not, however, prevent Anaximander from holding also that generation must be followed by destruction in a necessary cycle, that "things must all return whence they came according to destiny;" nor Empedocles from teaching that the souls of men were spirits fallen from a state of bliss in heaven and doomed to wander for "thirty thousand seasons," tossed from element to element, through all the changes of transmigration, plant, bird, fish, beast or human being, in this "over-vaulted cave," this "gloomy meadow of discord," the earth. With the theories of these two philosophers may be connected what Æschylus makes Prometheus say about the primitive state of men,—how they had eyes and saw not, ears and heard not—how they dwelt in the sunless depths of caves, were ignorant of the signs of the seasons and the simplest rudiments of art, pur-

[1] Plutarchus de Plac. Phil., ii. 25, iii. 16, v. 19, ap. Euseb. Præp. Evang., i. 8, &c.

[2] Mullach's Empedoclis Carmina, 314-316, in Frag. Phil. Gr. or Ælian H. A., xvi. 29, and Arist. Phys., ii. 8.

sued all their occupations without discernment, and left their entire life to chance and confusion, till he taught them to number, to write, to mark the risings and the settings of the stars, to build houses, to tame and train animals, to cure diseases, to navigate the sea, and practise the various modes of divination,[1] —and the similar language which Euripides puts into the mouth of Theseus in the Suppliants.[2] The oriental doctrine of vast chronological cycles or world-years reappeared in Greece, perhaps as an Orphic legend,[3] and certainly as a tenet of Stoic philosophy; for the advocates of that system, reasoning from their pantheistic conviction that God is the creative soul of the world, the eternal force which forms and permeates it, the spirit of ever-acting and living fire, which manifests itself outwardly as matter when its heat declines, and burns up matter when its heat is intense, concluded that in a necessary and endless succession world after world was created and destroyed, each new world being exactly like its predecessor, and all things in it without exception running round in the same order from beginning to end; in the words of Nemesius, "The Stoics taught that in fixed periods of time a burning and destruction of all things take place, and the world returns again from the beginning into the very same shape as it had before, and that the restoration of them all happens not once but often, or rather that the same things are restored an infinite number of times."[4]

It is likewise certain that no one conception of the course of the world's history exclusively possessed the Roman mind. No more graphic picture of man's primitive condition as a savage state is to be found in any literature, and no more ingenious or consistent conjectural account of the origination of language, laws, customs, institutions, arts, and sciences, than those in the last five hundred and thirty lines of the fifth book of Lucretius;[5] yet, although that great poet there develops in its entirety the theory which Sir John Lubbock and so many others are now urging on our acceptance, he elswhere teaches us that the world

[1] Æsch. Pr., 451-515. [2] Eur. Iket., 201-218.
[3] Creuzer's Symbolik, pt. iii. p. 315-318.
[4] Nem. de. Nat. Hom., c. 38; Cicero, Nat. Deor., ii. 46; Origen, Con. Cels., iv.
[5] De Rer. Nat., v. 925-1457.

like all things mortal will perish,—that already it is past its full growth—can no longer produce what it once did—is wasting away, worn out by age,—that the day draws near which shall give over to destruction seas, lands, and heaven—

> "Multosque per annos
> Sustentata ruet moles et machina mundi."[1]

Ovid gives expression with great beauty to the popular faith in four ages of continuous deterioration,[2] and represents Jove as remembering "that it is recorded in the book of fate, that the time will come when the sea and the earth and the palaces of heaven will be kindled into flame and glow with fervent heat, and the laboured structure of the world will perish."[3] Virgil sings of a golden age, a Saturnian time, when suffering and sin were unknown, when men had all things in common, and nature poured forth her bounties abundantly and spontaneously; but he believes that a beneficent purpose underlay man's fall from this condition, that Jove did away with this easy state of existence in order that man might be forced to evolve the resources in his own mind and in outer nature, and that experience by dint of thought should hammer out the various arts in a course of gradual discovery and improvement.[4] The poet thus combined belief in a fall with belief in progress; perhaps he combined belief in both with a belief in world-cycles, and he has certainly given marvellous expression to the hope that the simplicity, peace, and happiness of the golden age would be restored.[5] The well-known lines of Horace—

> "Damnosa quid non imminuit dies?
> Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
> Nos nequiores, mox daturos
> Progeniem vitiosiorem,"[6]—

have been often quoted as embodying the single and entire feeling of classical antiquity regarding the course of humanity; but they cannot fairly be understood as conveying even their author's own opinion of human development in itself, or as expressing any general "Weltanschauung;" they are merely the utterance

[1] De Rer. Nat., ii. 1148-1174; v. 92-95.
[2] Met., i. 89-150.
[3] Met., i. 256-258.
[4] Georg., i. 120-149.
[5] Ecl., iv.
[6] Odes, book iii. ode 6.

of complaint against the religious and moral corruption of his time; and he has elsewhere described the first men as mere animals, a filthy and speechless herd, fighting with their nails and fists for acorns and lairs—a race of beings who gradually found out words, and gradually learned to refrain from theft, adultery, and murder, to build and fortify towns, and establish laws.[1]

Passing from poets to prose authors we find that Cicero, without expressing an opinion as to general progress, has declared that philosophy is progressive; that study and application are rewarded by new discoveries; that the most recent things are generally the most precise and certain.[2] Seneca has declaimed against a philosophy which would aim at being useful, against mechanical inventions, wealth, and comfort, in a way that has become celebrated;[3] and yet he has not only insisted on the past progress of astronomical science, and avowed his belief that its progress would continue,[4] but has declared of nature in general that she has always new secrets to disclose to those who seek them, that she unveils her mysteries only gradually in the long succession of generations—and of truth, in general, that although we fancy ourselves initiated we are only on the threshold of her temple.[5] The elder Pliny has exhorted us "firmly to trust that the ages go on incessantly improving."[6] And still more remarkable in some respects than any of these recognitions of progress is that contained in the preface of the 'Epitome of Roman History' by Florus. It is not so comprehensive as many of the passages which have been cited, being explicitly confined to a single nation; but it is obviously drawn more from history itself, and it is the first clear enunciation of a theorem which has since been presented and illustrated in numberless ways,—viz., that nations pass through a succession of ages similar to those of the individual. "If any one," he says, "will consider the Roman people as if it

[1] Satires, book i. sat. 3.

[2] Academics, i. 4; ii. 5.

[3] Ep., 90.

[4] Nat. Quæst., vii. 25.

[5] Ibid., vii. 31. The following lines of a tragedy—probably Seneca's—have often been referred to as an unconscious prophecy of the discovery of America:

"Venient annis sæcula seris
Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
Laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
Tethysque novos detegat orbes;
Nec sit terris ultima Thule."—Medea, act ii. chorus.

[6] Hist. Nat., xix. 1-4.

were a man, and observe its entire course, how it began, how it grew up, how it reached a certain youthful bloom, and how it has since, as it were, been growing old, he will find it to have four degrees and stages (quatuor gradus processusque). Its first age was under the kings, and lasted nearly 250 years, during which it struggled round its mother against its neighbours; this was its infancy. The next extended from the consulship of Brutus and Collatinus to that of Appius Claudius and Quintus Fulvius, a period of 250 years, during which it subdued Italy; this was a time entirely given up to war, and may be called its youth. Thence to the time of Cæsar Augustus was a period of 200 years, in which it reduced to subjection the whole world; this may accordingly be called the manhood, and, as it were, the robust maturity of the empire. From Cæsar Augustus to our own age is a period of little less than 200 years, in which through the inactivity of the Cæsars the nation has, as it were, grown old and feeble, except that now under the sway of Trajan it raises its arms, and, contrary to the expectation of all, the old age of the empire, as if youth were restored to it, flourishes with new vigour."

Enough has now been said to prove that the notion of progress in history was far from unknown to the thinkers of Greece and Rome; that it was one of various notions of human development, all not unfrequently entertained; and to show at the same time that it was only apprehended in a vague, general way—never defined, never analysed, and especially never satisfactorily derived from a sufficiency of appropriate facts. Often as we meet with it in classical antiquity, we never find it in a form which shows that it has been comprehended with scientific precision and thoroughness. It is not otherwise as regards early Christian and medieval writers, among whom also the notion was at once never wholly lost, and never so apprehended as the philosophy of history presupposes and requires. A few sentences will suffice to show this.

It was no part of the mission of Christ or of His apostles to teach the full truth on such a subject as historical progress; but it came within their purpose to indicate the general relation of the Gospel to the past state, actual wants, and future destiny of

man; and the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, the general reasoning of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the principles involved in several of St Paul's arguments, and some of his explicit statements, affirm or imply that the Gospel, although a power descended from heaven, had been prepared for on earth from the beginning of history, and had appeared only *when the fulness of the time was come;* that there had been certain stages of progress in revelation, a certain wisely-graduated divine education of at least a portion of mankind, conditioned by their capacities, adapted to their necessities, and completed and crowned by absolute truth and a perfect life in Christ; while another class of passages, and especially the parables of the kingdom, declared that the manifestation of God in His Son was to be as a seed, which, although it might appear to human eye feeble and despicable, had an imperishable and inexhaustible life in it, which would not fail to survive any treatment, to overcome all obstacles, and gradually grow and progress till the result marvellously surpassed even hope and imagination, and was to operate in humanity like leaven in meal till the whole mass was transformed.

This teaching applied directly only to man in his moral and religious relations, and did not contain even in germ a doctrine of his industrial, scientific, æsthetic, or political development, although not only consistent with but calculated to lead on to the true doctrine thereof. Its being thus limited was fitted to secure its being understood, but failed to attain that end, as, unfortunately, from the first what had been spoken of the kingdom of God was misinterpreted as referring to the Church, or rather the kingdom of God was identified with the Church; and thus the glorious and comprehensive truth set forth in the parables of the kingdom was for centuries either ignored or sadly narrowed and perverted, and is, in fact, very defectively apprehended even at the present day.[1]

The Gnostics, while accepting Christianity as a divine and redemptive work, sought to rise above it by explaining it on the principles of oriental speculation, and by furnishing the complete solutions of all the deepest problems of religious thought,

[1] I have endeavoured to expound these parables from the true point of view in a volume of sermons entitled 'Christ's Kingdom upon Earth.'

such as how the material is related to the spiritual universe, how the former exists, and how the latter has been developed, how evil is to be accounted for, whither all things tend, what man's place, purpose, and destiny are, and what the religions which preceded Christianity meant and effected: they touched, in consequence, upon many of the most serious themes of historical as well as of religious philosophy, but it was in a false, arbitrary, fantastic way, so perversive of historical facts and so incompatible with genuine historical generalisation, that all their daring conceptions of evolution, emanations, æons, dualism, &c., can scarcely be said to have even helped towards a clearer and truer apprehension of the notion of human progress. The Montanists deemed Christianity incomplete even as a revelation, and proclaimed a special and more perfect dispensation, the reign of the promised Paraclete. The most gifted among them applied the idea of progressive development in defence of his heresy to the whole history of religion in the following remarkable manner: "In the works of grace, as in the works of nature, which proceed from the same Creator, everything unfolds itself by certain successive steps. From the seed-corn sprouts forth first the shoot, which by-and-by grows into the tree; this then puts forth the blossom, to be followed in its turn by the fruit, which itself arrives at maturity only by degrees. So the kingdom of righteousness unfolded itself by certain stages. First came the fear of God awakened by the voice of nature, without a revealed law; then the childhood under the law and the prophets; then that of youth under the Gospel; and lastly, the development to the ripeness of manhood through the new outpouring of the Holy Ghost, consequent upon the appearance of Montanus—the new instructions of the promised Paraclete. How is it possible that the work of God should stand still and make no progressive movement, while the kingdom of evil is continually enlarging itself and acquiring new strength?"[1] It requires to be observed that Tertullian did not refer the progressive development of religion to a continuous self-evolution, but to a continuous succession of extraordinary revelations. The great majority of the early orthodox Christians agreed with

[1] Tertullian, De virginibus velandis, c. i.

the Montanists in looking for the coming of a material millennial kingdom, an expectation which rested not only on a misinterpretation of Scriptural promises, but on the feeling that the reign of evil could only be destroyed by a supernatural outward manifestation, and consequently on a want of faith in the inherent ability of Christianity progressively to transform and sanctify society.[1]

Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, although taking liberal views of the relation of Christianity and heathendom, and regarding heathen philosophy as a providential preparation of the Gentiles for the Gospel, were so far from attaining to a comprehensive conception even of religious progress, that they imagined the truths taught by the heathen sages had been drawn from the Jewish Scriptures.[2] The speculations of Origen as to the course of creation and history were essentially drawn from heathen sources, although greatly modified by Christian doctrines and interests. His hypothesis of a series of worlds successively burnt up and restored differs from the Hindu and Stoic hypotheses to the same effect, chiefly by his conjoining it with the emphatic assertion of free-will, and, in consequence, maintaining that the worlds are not, so far at least as men are concerned, mere repetitions of one another. If, as an illustrious modern philosopher supposes, the earth has received its lowest forms of life from *fallen stones*, Origen's supposition of its having been peopled by *fallen angels* may possibly claim to be not an unscientific suggestion; and there is, undoubtedly, a certain grandeur in the way in which he conceives of all fallen creatures being on their way back to unity in God, "not suddenly, but slowly and gradually, seeing that the process of amendment and correction will take place imperceptibly in the individual instances during the lapse of countless and unmeasured ages, some outstripping others, and tending by a swifter course towards perfection, while others again follow close at hand, and some again a long way behind; and thus, through the numerous and

[1] Forthe literature of this curious subject see the article "Millennium" in Kitto's Cyclop. of Bib. Lit.

[2] Justin. Apol., ii. 13; i. 46. Dial. con. Tryph., c. 43. Clemens Alex. Stromata., i. 17-19; vi. 17.

uncounted orders of progressive beings who are being reconciled to God from a state of enmity, the last enemy is finally reached, who is called death, so that he also may be destroyed, and no longer be an enemy." [1] At the same time, it will be observed that this doctrine is wholly deduced from speculative principles, is incapable of inductive verification, nowhere distinctly applied to the movement of human society, and, in a word, is quite unhistorical in character.

I have already had occasion to state generally St Augustine's views of the course and plan of human history, and may therefore merely add now that the best thinking, at once the most judicious and liberal, among those who are called the Christian fathers, on the subject of the progress of Christianity as an organisation and system, is that of St Augustine, as elaborated and applied by Vincent of Lerins in his 'Commonitorium,' where we find substantially the same conception of the development of the Church and Christian doctrine, which, within the present century, De Maistre has made celebrated in France, Möhler in Germany, and Newman in England. Its main defect is that it places in the Church an authority other than, and virtually higher than, Scripture and reason, to determine what is true and false in the development of doctrine.

The general conditions of life and thought in the middle ages were extremely unfavourable to the growth and spread of the idea of progress. In the abounding ignorance the past was little known—in the abounding anarchy and confusion the meaning even of the present was undiscoverable; the principle of authority was maintained in the Church and the State, in science and practice, in such a way as to discourage and condemn the hope that reason might achieve great triumphs in the future; and study and reflection were mainly confined to theology and philosophy, the provinces of knowledge in which progress is least visible. Still the idea was not lost. Hugo of St Victor in the twelfth century,[2] and Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth,[3] for instance, both recognised progress to be a uni-

[1] De Principiis, iii. 6 (Crombie's translation).
[2] Summa, lib. i. pt. vi., and De Sacramentis, lib. i. pt. x.
[3] Summa Theologica. Prima secundæ, quæst. 98, 106, 107.

versal law of things, and all knowledge to be progressive; both also insisted that revelation had been gradually unfolded so as to suit the different requirements of different ages, and that although it had ceased with the completion of the Gospel, which was a great advance on the law, room had been left for continuous and indefinite progress in the comprehension of the Gospel. The man, however, who of all medieval philosophers saw most clearly the deficiencies of antiquity, and cherished the most rational hopes of intellectual advance in the future, was Roger Bacon. This was due to an acquaintance with experimental science and an insight into its possibilities very wonderful in the thirteenth century.[1] The externality and corruption of the Church produced in this same century a reaction which took more or less the form of mysticism, and based itself on the boldest conception of human development which had as yet appeared, that which is associated with the names of Amaury of Chartres, the Abbot Joachim of Flore, the Franciscan General John of Parma, and his friend Brother Gerhard, the author of the celebrated 'Introductorius in Evangelium Æternum.' According to these men and their adherents, universal history ought to be divided into three great periods or ages,—the age of the Old Testament or Kingdom of the Father, the Age of the New Testament or Kingdom of the Son, and the age of the Eternal Gospel or Kingdom of the Spirit. In the first, God manifested Himself by works of almighty power, and ruled by law and fear; in the second, Christ has revealed Himself through mysteries and ordinances to faith; and in the third, for which the others have been merely preparatory, the mind will see truth face to face without any veil of symbols, the heart will be filled with a love which excludes all selfishness and dread, and the will, freed from sin, will need no law over it but be a law unto itself.[2] This theory has come down to our own times, chiefly through the influence of Lessing who adopted it. Dante, Paracelsus, Postel, Campanella, and others, maintained with more

[1] See especially all pt. i. of the 'Opus Majus.'

[2] There is an excellent history of the idea of progress in the middle ages in Laurent's 'Etudes sur l' Histoire de l'Humanité,' t. viii. pt. ii. He has given a full account of the hypothesis referred to regarding the reign of the Spirit and the eternal Gospel.

or less clearness analogous views; and thus the notion of progress was transmitted to the seventeenth century, when a new era began for it, four illustrious men not widely separated in time—Bodin, Bacon, Descartes, and Pascal—giving it expression in so striking a manner that its importance could no longer be overlooked.

I do not require to follow farther at present the history of the idea of progress. The idea of human unity is closely connected with that of human progress. Progress implies continuity, and continuity unity. In order to be progress there must be something which progresses, for progress is an attribute, not an abstraction, and that something must remain itself under all the phases it assumes. There are many stages between the seed and the perfect tree, the ovum and perfect animal; but stage must so follow on stage that the continuity is not broken, that the one individual existence is preserved throughout, or there can be no progress. In so far as phenomena of any kind are isolated, are not brought into connection with one another, and shown to be manifestations of something which has a certain individuality distinguishing it from everything else, they are unable to be brought into a progressive series. It was impossible that men could recognise that there was progress in history before they recognised that there was unity in history—or, in other words, that their race, while in the ceaseless succession of generations, nations, and systems ever modifying and transforming itself, yet ever remains in essential nature the same. And only slowly, only by innumerable short stages, only owing to the consecutive and concurrent action of countless causes, has humanity fully awakened to the consciousness of its unity, and the possibility been admitted of surveying the whole of the past and present of society from a certain single lofty point of view, and rationally co-ordinating the entire series of human events.

This unity, the apprehension of which is essential to the comprehension of history, is unity of nature, not of origin. Unity of nature may, as is generally believed, involve and prove unity of origin; but as the reality of the latter unity is still keenly contested by many on real or supposed grounds of science, it is especially desirable to remember that only the recognition of

the former is needful as a condition of the philosophical study of history, only discernment enough to see a man to be a man, to have the characteristics and rights of a man. It is the perception of this unity which has been so slowly attained. And yet men have never been found without some faint sense of it. Even in the lowest stage of barbarism they manifest by living together a sort of consciousness of the bonds which unite them, but, of course, it is a very vague, loose, and feeble consciousness. The rudest savages—the Bosjesmans, for example—do not live in complete isolation, but in society; their society, however, has no chiefs, no priests, no marriages, no institutions or laws; it is a loose indefinite mixture of tribe and family, and owes the little consistency which preserves its separate existence chiefly to fear and hatred of the enemies which surround it. In all the succeeding phases of this social state—that of the tribe—men fanatically regard its interests beyond everything else, and readily sacrifice to them everything else; they do not recognise that men belonging to other tribes have even such primary rights as those to life, liberty, and property. Tribes and clans are kept together not by the mutual goodwill of their members, but by the enmity which they bear to neighbouring tribes. It is mutual hostility which consolidates them into some sort of social unity, and, no doubt, that is the final cause of so unamiable a passion prevailing so universally in the lower stages of human development. A truer and finer feeling would be less powerful, or rather savage man would not and could not entertain it, and therefore Providence makes use in order to gain its end of the passion which will be effective, although that be one which must lose its influence as mind and morality progress, as the thoughts of men are widened, and their feelings purified.

The tribe may extend into the State, and when such extension takes place it must be accompanied by a wider recognition of human unity, and a corresponding growth of feeling, as well as by a wider conception of duty. The oldest great States known to us are those of Asia and the Nile valley. In all these States only a comparatively few individuals, the kings, great warriors, priests, wealthy and high-born chiefs, have counted as individually significant, while the vast majority of the population have

been either slaves, or freemen so poor and degraded that *the man* in them has been invisible even to their own eyes. These great monarchies were also so situated geographically, so locally isolated—their histories flowed in channels so far apart and apparently divergent—that the thought of a comprehensive and pervasive human unity was unlikely to suggest itself to any mind, and incapable of being convincingly verified. Hence, except perhaps in a few individuals, there was in these kingdoms no national feeling in the form of sympathy or affection based on the recognition of community of character and interests, and giving unity to the aspirations and aims of all who composed the nation, but only in that form of senseless antipathy which history shows us that peoples rendered brutal by oppressive governments invariably cherish against each other; and since the recognition and sense of unity did not rise thus high, of course, it did not rise higher and transcend the barriers of race, of language, of government, and of territory, so as to embrace the whole of mankind and "take every creature in of every kind."

The isolation of these nations, however, although great as compared with modern European nations, was not complete: war, commerce, migrations, and religious proselytism, all did something to connect them; and through each of their histories traces of a tendency towards the apprehension of human unity as such may be detected. Egypt, notwithstanding the dislike of foreigners ascribed to its inhabitants, undoubtedly exerted a considerable influence on the development of the nations near it, and commingled or amalgamated physically and morally various originally distinct Asiatic and African peoples. It is generally admitted that M. Ampère (Rev. Archéol., v^e^. année) has proved *caste* not to have been an Egyptian institution; and whatever importance may have been attached to class distinctions in ancient Egyptian society, it was universally believed that before the judgment-seat of Osiris all men from Pharaoh to the poorest slave would be equal, and that each would receive according to the deeds done in his body, whether good or evil.[1]

[1] This is proved by the texts of the Funeral Ritual, the hymns, and prayers, translated by M. de Rougé.

It is now known that China has been much less isolated and self-contained than was long supposed, and that even the internal development of moral thought reached to a recognition of the duty of universal benevolence in one sage at least, the philosopher Mih-Teih, who lived in the fourth or fifth century before Christ, and wrote an essay expressly to prove that all the evils which disturb and embitter human society arise from the want of the brotherly love which every man owes to every other. From that essay, as translated by Dr Legge, I may quote these words: "If the law of universal mutual love prevailed, it would lead to the regarding another kingdom as one's own, another family as one's own, another person as one's own. That being the case, the princes, loving one another, would have no battle-fields; the chiefs of families, loving one another, would attempt no usurpations; men, loving one another, would commit no robberies; rulers and ministers, loving one another, would be gracious and loyal; fathers and sons, loving one another, would be kind and filial; brothers, loving one another, would be harmonious. Yea, men in general, loving one another, the strong would not make prey of the weak; the many would not plunder the few; the rich would not insult the poor; the noble would not be insolent to the mean; and the skilful would not impose upon the simple. The way in which all the miseries, usurpations, enmities, and hatreds in the world, may be made not to arise, is universal mutual love."[1] It is possible that Mih's universal love may, as Dr Legge supposes, have rested on no idea of man as man, and been inculcated not as a law of humanity, but simply as a virtue which would find its scope and consummation in the good government of China; I cannot, however, think this a probable view. The doctrine of Mih was assailed by the celebrated Meng-tseu or Mencius, on the ground of leaving no place for the particular affections; yet Mencius saw with a clearness and insisted with an emphasis that man by the very frame and make of his constitution is a being formed for virtue, for righteousness, for benevolence, which make him also in some degree a witness to the truth of the essential unity of men. In Indian Brahminism this truth was and is directly

[1] The Chinese Classics, ii. 106, 107.

denied; but the denial gave rise in the way of reaction to the grandest affirmation of it, perhaps, to be found in heathenism, that of Budhism. Budha is represented as animated by a boundless charity, an affection embracing every class of society and every living creature; as voluntarily foregoing for myriads of years final beatitude, and voluntarily enduring through numberless births the most manifold trials and afflictions, in order to work out salvation for all sentient beings; and his law is not only announced as thus one of good news for all, but as enjoining, along with meekness, patience, and forgiveness of injuries, a love and pity which are to recognise no distinctions of race, or caste, or religion. While, however, Budhism thus recognises in one aspect the essential unity of men, it overlooks other aspects thereof; regarding only that side of human life which is directly turned towards the infinite and eternal, it is blind to its temporal and social sides; it enjoins universal love, not, however, that men may thereby have their whole natures and lives sanctified and beautified, but that they may be the sooner delivered from the burden of personal existence, from the ties of life and society in any form. Its logical consequence would be the conversion of the world into a brotherhood, not of men but of monks, each practising charity with a private and selfish aim, which makes it a charity without love, or a form of love without soul.

The histories of India and China have always flowed in courses of their own, not only apart from each other, but outside of the main stream of human events. A multiplicity of histories first met and commingled in that of Persia. The Persian empire extended itself over the whole of Western Asia, and into Europe and Africa; it drew together Bactria, Parthia, Media, Assyria, Syria, Palestine, Phœnicia, Asia Minor, Armenia, Thrace, Egypt, and the Cyrenaica. The voice of the Great King was law from the Indus on the east to the Egean sea and Syrtian gulf on the west, from the Danube and the Caucasus on the north to the Indian Ocean and the deserts of Arabia and Nubia on the south. Xerxes led fifty-five peoples against Greece. In Persia we see, therefore, the first great attempt at the outward realisation of unity through military conquest in

the form of a universal empire; it was, however, only an attempt, and the result was no real union but a loose aggregation of nations. The empire of Alexander which displaced it, although still more wondrous, because the gigantic conception of a single intellect, the gigantic work of a single will, was of an essentially similar character, being composed of nearly the same materials connected in the same manner, and so it naturally soon fell asunder and crumbled away. Its great service was the diffusion of the principles of Greek civilisation throughout the conquered nations.

At a first glance, Greece—so small and so divided—may appear scarcely entitled to a place in the history of the idea under consideration. The majority of her inhabitants were slaves, and until the age of Pericles the predominant and general feeling among her free men was hatred of strangers, of the barbarians; love of Greece as such, of the nation in its entirety, either existed not at all, or no farther than was involved in hatred to the barbarians. The sympathies of the Greek did not, previous to that time, go beyond his city and the little territory around it; these he loved, but he hated other Greek cities, although not so much as Persia. In the lifetime of Socrates a great change and enlargement of thought occurred, and all the best minds of the immediately succeeding generation would seem to have realised more or less that the affections of every Greek ought to embrace Greece as a whole, instead of being confined to his native city; that wars between Greek cities were unnatural; that all Greek men should constitute one brotherhood or family: yet even Plato and Aristotle were imbued with prejudices against foreigners. Their contemporaries, Antisthenes and Diogenes, the founders of Cynic philosophy, were, however, the first in Greece to cast off such prejudices, and they did so completely, falling even into the contrary extreme. They taught that to the wise man slavery and freedom, and all social and civil regulations and institutions, were matters of indifference; that to him virtue, conformity to the law of nature, was the only and all-sufficient good; and that he could recognise no distinctions of city or nation, but must necessarily be a citizen of the world. Hence, as Zeller has well remarked, "the leading thought of their extensive political sym-

pathies was far less the oneness and the union of mankind than the freedom of the individual from the bonds of social life and the limits of nationality." The Stoics developed and improved this Cynic doctrine, and diffused it with far greater authority and success. Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus taught that the whole race of mankind should be regarded as one great community, the members of which exist for the sake of one another, under subjection to the law of reason. Fragments which have been preserved of Menander and Philemon, the two chief poets of the Greek new comedy, give beautiful expression to the same sentiment, showing that it had become no mere tenet of a philosophical school, but a general feeling. What had brought about so great a change in so short a time? Doubtless many causes,—the internal evolution of thought, the growth of a general refinement of feelings and manners, increased intercourse with foreigners, experience of the evils of wars and dissensions, and, above all, the reduction of the various separate states of Greece under the sway of Philip of Macedonia, followed by the wide conquests of his son the heroic Alexander. The Macedonian power broke down the last distinctions which separated Greeks from Greeks, and then proceeded to destroy those which separated Greeks from barbarians; and the later philosophy and poetry of Greece in teaching universal citizenship and brotherhood were in no inconsiderable degree the reflections of the prodigious political and social changes which resulted from the victories of Philip and Alexander. A unity so produced, however, could not be other than most imperfect; one essentially negative and abstract, empty and unreal. Men took refuge in the thought of citizenship of the world, because actual citizenship had everywhere lost its worth and dignity. Their sense of brotherhood was the result of common misfortunes, disgraces, and disillusions, and was merely a consciousness of there being in every man a something akin to every other underlying and independent of all that is outward and public in life, accompanied by a feeling of the utter hopelessness of realising this unity in actual existence, in social and political practice.

The greatest service, however, which Greece rendered to the cause of human unity has not yet been mentioned. It was that

she discovered the universal principles of all high purely human culture, and embodied them in forms of almost perfect beauty, to remain as objects of admiration and models for imitation to educated men of all ages in all lands. In Greece, man felt himself for the first time conscious of his own true nature as a free rational personality; and on the basis of that knowledge he laid a foundation which still endures for all our science, for philosophy, for mathematics, physics, logic, ethics, and politics, and produced a sculpture, an architecture, a poetical and dramatic, an oratorical and historical literature, which are still unsurpassed, as well as varied types of character as grand, and many achievements as glorious, as any which the world has witnessed, a few only excepted which have been manifestly due to a special spiritual grace.

The science, art, and literature of Greece were reflected in and imitated by those of Rome, the conquests of which thus carried Greek culture to the Atlantic and the Tay, as those of Alexander had previously carried them to the Indian Ocean and the Sutlej. But Rome, as I have already had occasion to point out, did far more than this for the idea under consideration, being the first power truly to realise a vast external unity of empire under settled law. Rome not only conquered the world by the sword, but organised it by her policy. By tenacity of purpose, valour and discipline, practical sense and legislative capacity, she accomplished what the Persian monarchs had sought in vain to effect by hurling countless hosts against surrounding nations, and Alexander the Great by his brilliant strategy and resistless phalanx; till, although originally small as a grain of seed, she overspread the earth, ruled during many generations from the rising to the setting sun, and bequeathed laws and institutions which still live, and which promise to be immortal. Her progress was one of steady growth, of gradual incorporation, of giving and receiving, of concession and adaptation; slow but sure—sure because slow; because no step was taken which needed to be retraced, no gain made by the sword which was not secured by the statute and the ploughshare; because whatever she did, if worth doing, she did thoroughly. "When we see," says M. Comte, "this noble republic devoting three or four centuries to the solid

establishment of its power in a radius of under a hundred miles, about the same time that Alexander was spreading out his marvellous empire in the course of a few years, it is not difficult to foresee the fate of the two empires, though the one usefully prepared the East for the succession of the other."

The progress of Rome was not one merely of external extension but of internal development; a growth of human thought as well as of human power. The substance of Roman history is not to be found in her military achievements, but in the elaboration and diffusion of her laws, the spread of Roman citizenship over the world, the gradual and successive incorporation of the plebs, the Latins, the Italians, the provincials, and the nations, into the city, which originally consisted of a few patricians and their clients; a result only possible because Roman law, unlike what was designated by that name in the oriental despotisms and the Greek democracies, was a thing full from the first of living power, and so capable of immense expansion, and of adjusting itself to every change of circumstances. The Roman idea which subordinated everything to the State, may be said to have been ruined by its own successes; to have abolished itself in fulfilling itself. The greater the extension given to the citizenship, the more it lost in comprehension, in distinctive significance; and when conferred on all subjects of the empire, nearly the only thing meant by it was what had been originally most suppressed, least acknowledged, in it—the conception of human community, of men having a worth and rights simply as men. The tie of citizenship was then really done away; but that was not before a certain reverence for the natural ties which bind men together as men had grown up and could replace it. Apart even from Christianity, the course of history, the refining influence of imaginative literature, and the teaching of philosophy, especially of the Stoic philosophy, raised the Roman mind to recognise that there was a One Law, embracing all nations and all times, which no senate or people had created or could annul, and which enjoined universal justice and universal benevolence. That men are not merely citizens—that every man is debtor to every other—that they have a common nature, and, in consequence, reciprocal rights and obligations—were well-known

truths in the time of Cicero, and commonplaces in the times of even the earlier emperors. The evidence for this affirmation is so abundant, that to adduce it with anything like adequate fulness would detain us too long; therefore I merely give below a few references to works in which the labour has been already carefully performed, and would venture, at the same time, specially to recommend the perusal of the passages indicated, as, from ignorance of the facts therein collected, Christianity is often represented as having exclusively originated and promulgated truths which were, intellectually at least, undoubtedly recognised in pagan Rome.[1]

By means, then, of Greek philosophy and Roman policy, the human mind in Europe rose to an apprehension of a bond of unity between all mankind independent of class and national distinctions. Budhism has to some extent performed the same service in the south and east of Asia. It is to be remarked, however, that it has approached the idea of human unity in the opposite direction to that followed by the classical world, and has seen, as it were, only its opposite side. It has recognised the unity of men in relation to the infinite source and ultimate end of existence; but has so concentrated thought and affection on that aspect of it as to have overlooked and despised its merely temporal and civil relationships. It has accordingly done very little for man's social welfare, for political freedom, justice, and prosperity. The Greco-Roman world, on the other hand, worked upwards to the idea on its purely human side, and, indeed, mainly by the extension of the notion of citizenship. But that, too, is an imperfect view, a single aspect of a whole, both sides of which are most important. And when thus imperfectly apprehended, the idea is devoid of self-realising power; the great truths it involves cannot make their way into life, but have to remain in the state of dead abstract affirmations. This the Romans discovered by the most painful experience. The cor-

[1] Janet, Histoire de la Philosophie Morale et Politique, t. i. lib. i. c. iv.; Denis, Histoire des Théories et des Idées Morales dans l'Antiquité, t. ii. (Cicéron—Etat Moral et Social du Monde Gréco-Romain—Conclusion); Aubertin, Sénèque et Saint-Paul, especially Deuxième Partie, ch. ix. x. and xi.; Laurent, Etudes—Rome, lib. iii. ch. ii. and iv.

ruption of the empire was not arrested and little delayed by the growth of correct views of man's duties to man; selfishness and injustice seemed to increase, self-sacrifice and magnanimity to decrease, the clearer and more general became the perception of the beauty of universal benevolence and justice. As the sense of this contradiction between their theory and practice, between the law of duty in itself and the respect which it actually received, deepened, the hearts of men in the Greco-Roman world instinctively turned away more and more from the old State religion, and groped after another capable of satisfying the new affections and breathing life into the wider thoughts which had grown up; instinctively turned more and more to mysterious Egypt and the religious East. Through the introduction of oriental beliefs and rites, the spread of the Judeo-Alexandrian, Neopythagorean, and Neoplatonic philosophies, the Western mind was brought into contact with the Eastern, and enlarged and profited by the contact. It only found, however, what was really wanted in the religion which had been long providentially prepared and was finally wonderfully manifested in the land of Palestine; a religion which neither, like other religions of Asia, unduly lost sight of the finite in the infinite, nor, like those of Greece and Rome, of the infinite in the finite, but contained the principles of their reconciliation, proclaiming the universal brotherhood of man, and enjoining, at least in a general way, all the virtues which the realisation thereof implies—while, at the same time, by its revelation of one God and Father of all, one Saviour, one law, one hope, laying open the fountains of moral force needed to enable men to carry into practice their convictions of the unity, equality, and rights to love and justice, of all men.

With the conversion of the Roman empire to Christianity, the human mind may be regarded as having at length risen to the apprehension of human unity on both sides. Christian authors and teachers proclaimed with one accordant voice the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men. What progress, then, it may be asked, had society in this direction still to make? If it had really advanced so far, could it advance farther? When the equality of all men before God, and the universal obligation of charity and justice, were explicitly acknowledged and enforced

by the most powerful of conceivable considerations, was its goal as far as the development of this particular idea was concerned, not reached? Most certainly not. On the contrary, humanity had then only set its foot on the true path, and had the whole length thereof before it. To perceive the mere general outlines of an idea is one thing, and to know it thoroughly, to realise it, which is the only way thoroughly to know it, is another and very different thing. But certainly no Christian writer, and still less, of course, any other, in the Roman empire, can be credited with having had more than a general and abstract conception of human unity; and that that was to have only a vague, partial, and inaccurate conception, the false separation of secular from spiritual, the contempt for the economical virtues, the indifference to industry, commerce, and national prosperity, the submission to despotism and slavery, the unworthy views of marriage, the honour given to celibacy, the admiration of asceticism, and the intolerance of variety of opinions, characteristic even of the greatest Christian thinkers of these times, conclusively showed. An Augustine, Basil, Chrysostom, Cyprian, Jerome, Origen, &c., preached unity, universal brotherhood, justice, and charity, in as explicit general terms as have ever been employed since; but any man who fancies them to have had therefore other than the most imperfect views of human unity, the most imperfect insight into what man as man really was, may be assured that his vocation is not that of tracing the growth of ideas. The Christian fathers repeated what they had learned from Christ and His apostles, scattered what they had received; but that as regards the truth of human unity was only seed—*semina rerum*, not *res ipsas*.

That Christian truth could only act immediately and directly on individual life, only mediately and indirectly on social life, that it might receive the assent of an entire nation and yet not save it from decrepitude and death, was proved on a vast scale and in the most indisputable manner by the example of the Byzantine empire. Christianity presided over the foundation of that empire, and ruled in it to its fall, a period of more than a thousand years; and yet the result was one of the most despicable forms of civilisation the world has ever seen, the destruc-

tion of which was a gain, even although it was replaced by Mohammedan rule. The spread of Christianity in the West did certainly little to delay, and probably even hastened, the fall of Rome, which was taken by Alaric not a century after Christianity had become the State religion of the Roman empire.

The old classical world was exhausted. It was only on a richer and fresher soil that the first principles of the Gospel and the highest results of Greek and Roman genius could mingle in productive union, could gradually create a civilisation in which the new, that is, the true, man would be manifested. The barbarians were needed, and the barbarians came. Their invasions broke the bonds by which Rome had succeeded, after so many centuries of exertion, in uniting together the various parts of the world, and reduced the whole social system of which she had been the soul and centre to chaos, but a chaos necessary as an antecedent to the rise of a more natural and harmonious, a richer and freer, social organisation. There is reason to believe that no single idea of special value struck out by the Greek or Roman mind was permanently lost in consequence of the temporary anarchy caused by the successes of the barbarians, and certainty that no truth of Christianity was lost. It was the destiny of the conquerors to be in course of time conquered both by the classic and Christian spirit, and their distinctive mission to invigorate human life with the love of independence, of personal liberty, in which the ancient world had been so deficient, but without which man can never know or be his true self. Rome and Christianity both tended of their very natures to unity, the one towards civil and the other towards spiritual unity; but unity, however legitimate, is not of itself sufficient; individuality, diversity, is as necessary as unity, and is even necessary to unity, if it is to be a true, that is, not an abstract and dead but a concrete and living unity. Individuality, independence, was, however, precisely what was most characteristic of the barbarous Germans.

Since the human mind emerged from the chaos of the invasions, it has met with many misadventures, and strayed into many wrong paths in its quest of true unity, but has never been absolutely arrested in its advance,—has always, on the contrary,

got correction through adversity and instruction from its errors. Thus it welcomed the growing power of the Church, was with it in its struggles for dominion, and made of it a thoroughly organised hierarchical system which bent all things to its own purposes, and ruled with despotic sway over millions of human beings. In so doing there is no doubt that it denied in part the unity and equality of men in Christ, and established an institution which has long been more active than any other in separating man from man, and in enslaving the many to the few. Let us not suppose it, however, to have been guilty of mere folly in the matter. The Roman Catholic Church has indeed sinned grievously against humanity, but it has also conferred upon it some great services. In ages of violence it asserted that another law than that of brute force, the law of justice and charity, was the rightful law of all men. In the darkest days there went up from it solemn reminders of universal duties, hopes, and terrors:—

> "Hora novissima, tempora pessima sunt, vigilemus;
> Ecce minaciter imminet arbiter, ille supremus."

It was the chief instrumentality through which "the powers of the world to come" acted on many generations, and displayed themselves as historical forces. It linked together the community of European peoples by the ties of a common creed, authority, and, interests. It preserved, humanly speaking, the treasures both of divine wisdom and of Greek and Roman genius. It admitted freely into its ranks all classes of men from the prince to the serf, and, by assigning them their places according to their merits and abilities, gave a happy contradiction to all its implicit denials of human unity and equality. The ascetic and monastic ideal of life which it held forth and recommended with such wonderful success was, undoubtedly, a narrow one, most unsuited for man as man, and one even which led to monstrous corruptions; yet it was also not only a natural reaction against the abounding evil in the world, but a most emphatic affirmation of the truth that the worth of human existence lies far less in enjoyment than in self-sacrifice, self-discipline, and aspiration towards the eternal and divine.

Charlemagne restored for a short time the Roman tradition of a universal civil empire, furthered the progress of the Papal idea of a universal spiritual empire, closed the era of barbaric invasion, and secured for Christianity and Latin culture their due influence as factors in the more complex civilisation which began to appear. The rapid decomposition of his vast empire into small parcels of soil, each with a few inhabitants dependent on the uncontrolled will of a petty tyrant, is apt at first glance to seem a directly and exclusively retrograde movement. It was in reality, however, a necessary stage of transition to a higher unity. It preserved and developed that love of personal freedom and sense of personal obligations and rights which the Germans brought with them merely in germ, merely as dispositions and tendencies. But for the feudal distribution of society, these dispositions and tendencies would soon have disappeared, and with their disappearance would have vanished all rational hope of a unity to be attained not through the mutilation and destruction but through the comprehension and satisfaction of man's nature. To consider the love of personal independence, the fidelity of man to man, the sense of individual honour, and respect for women, as the peculiar and persistent characteristics of the German race, is to fall into one of the grossest delusions which has been generated by Teutonic self-conceit. Greco-Roman and Christian influences required to be brought to bear on Germanic dispositions, and the circumstances of society, to be long favourable, in order that civilisation might possess these excellences. There is a wide interval between any quality of barbarism and a virtue of civilisation. Now, feudalism, although a most deplorable system, incompatible with the legitimate claims alike of authority and of liberty, and directly opposed to the impartial justice and universal charity of the Gospel, was specially calculated to foster the virtues referred to, and thereby to advance humanity in the way of self-knowledge. It rooted out and made impossible the return of the feeling so predominant in the classical world, that the individual man had no rights as against the State. It substituted for the Greco-Roman view of the relation of public to private life one just the reverse, and which, although quite as one-sided

as that which it temporarily replaced, had the great merit of widening thought by bringing to light the side previously unseen. If it filled the heart of the castle lord with pride and insolence, it also trained him to self-reliance, decision of character, and prowess. It made him far more dependent for his happiness on his wife and children than ever the oriental, Greek, or Roman man had been, and thus contributed to the moral elevation of the family. Besides, the isolated and scattered castles of the feudal chiefs were not wholly inaccessible to priest and lawyer, merchant and minstrel, to Christian truth, Roman traditions, or even Saracenic science ; life within them was not wholly uninfluenced by the neighbouring monastery or town, by the policy of Pope and Emperor, and the general movement of history. Under the action of these powers, feudalism in a measure civilised itself and flowered into chivalry. Out of what had been originally but a robber's den, the court of the castle, came forth courtship and courtesy, a new ideal of conduct inspired partly by piety towards God, and partly by gallantry towards woman, sentiments of love and honour of a delicacy previously unknown, and a poetry and romance which have grown into the national literatures of almost every country of Europe.

Throughout the whole existence of feudalism, two powers —the monarchy and the Church—steadily resisted with such strength as they possessed its anarchical and anti-social tendencies. Self-interest constrained them to strive for order, for unity, and so to counteract the self-will of the nobility. In each land the struggle took a different form; but in all it left deep and ineffaceable impressions. The kings of France, confining their energies within or immediately around their own kingdom, wrought steadily on until they had concentrated all power in their own hands, and produced that extreme unity of administration which accounts for so much both of good and evil, of achievement and failure, in the history of France. The kings of England had, from the Norman Conquest, a preponderance of power which not only sufficed to hold the whole nation firmly bound together, but compelled the nobility to ally themselves with the commons, and this laid the foundation for that union of order and liberty which has been realised in a more perfect measure in England

than anywhere else in the world. The emperors of Germany cherished the idea that the Roman empire still subsisted both in law and fact; and that they, as the successors of the Cæsars, were the rightful heads of Christendom, and entitled even to choose Popes and invest them with their temporal sovereignty, although spiritually their subjects. The dispute between the Emperor and the Pope was the axis on which for more than two centuries European history revolved; it was productive of many and great evils to Germany and Italy, but productive also of great blessings to Europe in general. "If it had been possible," says Gervinus, "for the Empire and the Papacy to have united peaceably; if that which had already occurred in the Byzantine kingdom of the East could also have occurred in the Teutonic Roman kingdom of the West, and could the combined secular and spiritual power have rested on one head, the idea of unity would have gained the preponderance over that of national developments, and in the centre of this quarter of the world, in Germany or Italy, a monarchical power and single form of government would have been constructed, which would have thrown the utmost difficulties in the way of the national and human progression of the whole of Europe." Fortunately a union of the two powers did not take place. The one saved the European world from entire slavery to the other. Their long struggle favoured the rise and growth of independent thought, and, by preventing the realisation of a one-sided and external unity, furthered the cause of a full and free unity.

The Crusades contributed directly and indirectly in many ways to generate and diffuse the feeling of a common Christendom, and even of a common humanity. They united in a common sentiment, Norman and Saxon and Celt, Frenchman and Austrian, Norwegian and Italian; they were the first events of universal European significance which rested on a European public opinion; they softened in some measure the antipathies of the races and peoples which gathered themselves together to combat for a common cause; they made the baron feel more dependent on his vassals, and raised the serf in his own estimation and in that of others; they strengthened the power of the

Crown, and favoured the growth of the communes and free towns; they widened the range of men's ideas and tastes and desires; they gave an impulse to science and art, and a still greater impulse to commerce; and thus, although they had their origin in fanaticism, and were accompanied with unspeakable horrors, and followed by numerous most serious evils which do not require here to be mentioned, they also undoubtedly helped in no slight degree to emancipate the human mind and educate the human heart. Intermediate between the Saracenic invasions and the Renaissance, they are one of the three great medieval incidents by which the more thoughtful minds in Europe were brought to see that the unity of humanity underlies even the differences of Christianity, Mohammedanism, and heathendom; and that the love of man to man enjoined by Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan and elsewhere, must not be limited to the communion of believers.

To trace, however, in its whole length, breadth, and depth, the process by which, from this point to that where the present history commences, the human mind advanced in self-knowledge, and consequent recognition of the unity in variety of humanity, would be to write the entire history of Europe throughout the intervening time. It would be to follow the development of industry in country and town, explaining how the labouring population had been affected by changes in the forms of tenure of property and by changes in the general government of society, by trade corporations and their regulations, by the Crusades, the communes, the free towns, by the advance of the industrial and fine arts, and the extension of geographical knowledge, the discovery of America, the influx into Europe of the precious metals, &c.; and, in a word, to show how the fetters of industry and commerce began to be broken one after another, honest labour to be acknowledged as honourable human work, the labouring classes to gain their human rights and recognition on the page of human history, and a *tiers État* to arise to which kings and nobles were at length to become servants. It would be to trace the development of the arts of architecture, music, sculpture, painting, poetry, and romance, alike under the pro-

tection of the Church and in their growth to independence, and to show in doing so how the imagination of man had been educated, the sphere of his activity widened, and his history enriched with new elements. It would be to describe the toilsome progress of science, the preservation and revival of ancient learning, and the means and institutions devised to diffuse science and learning; and to estimate what the cultivation given to speculation and formal thought, as applied by the theologians and philosophers of the middle ages to the highest subjects, had done for the modern intellect. It would be to delineate the long series of attempts to deliver revealed truth from the false glosses, and the religious nature of man from the degrading thraldom, imposed by the Roman Church,—a series of attempts which issued in that great and successful movement which in the sixteenth century secured for a half of Europe the right of private judgment in religion, a right which is the condition and guarantee of all other rights and of all liberty. It would be—very specially—to trace the formation within the European unity of national individualities, since the formation of nations has unquestionably contributed in the highest degree to a profound and exhaustive development of the human soul; while the further progress of the race in science, in art, in literature, in philosophy, and in religion, is dependent upon the preservation and the quickening collision of the resultant variety in unity. It would be necessary to do all this and more, for it is only through having exerted its forces persistently, methodically, and heroically, in all these directions and various others, that the human spirit has, to use the words of Mr Goldwin Smith, "slowly and painfully transcended the barriers interposed by dividing mountains and estranging seas, by diversities of custom and language, creed and polity, by prejudices of race and class, in its progressive realisation of the glorious truth of the universal brotherhood of man;" it is only through an immense and multiform activity, long-continued and strenuous toil, protracted and countless sacrifices, that it has learned to recognise what a vast variety of manifestations, what an infinity of differences, have their ground in the essential human unity, without preju-

dice to aught distinctive of manhood, to any of its fundamental rights.

As late as the sixteenth century—that in which this history commences—even the European mind had advanced but a little way along most of these routes, and had only the most defective apprehension of the general truth towards which they converge. There was, for example, nothing approaching to an adequate recognition of the true place of industry and science in human life, and of the industrial and scientific classes in human society, until the latter half of the eighteenth century. It was, we may safely say, somewhat late in modern times before humanity had displayed the variety of resources, discarded the prejudices, overthrown or surmounted the barriers, gained the triumphs, indispensable to a perception of its own unity in variety sufficiently accurate and comprehensive to support any philosophy of history in the least degree satisfactory. Throughout the whole of the middle age, and even long after its close, man's knowledge of himself, man's idea of humanity, was far too vague and general, far too narrow, external, and superficial, to be available and effective in so difficult a scientific enterprise. Longer on the growth of that idea I must not dwell.

There is another idea, that of true or rational freedom, equally involved in history, and equally implied in the formation of a philosophy of history. Indeed, various authors—Hegel, as is well known, being among the number—have represented this freedom as *the* aim of history, and to trace its development as *the* task of the philosophy of history. I regard their view as erroneous from its one-sidedness and exclusiveness; but so far agree with them as to believe that the progress of freedom is a most important part or phase of the historical movement, and to follow and explain that progress a very important part or problem of historical philosophy. Further, as I have said, it is implied in the formation of a philosophy of history. Until so far realised in the consciousness of individuals and the constitution of societies, no philosophy of history could be so much as thought of; until farther realised than it was in the Oriental, Classical, and Medieval worlds, no philosophy of history except of the very

humblest kind could be constructed. I shall, however, in the course of this work have, both to summarise and examine what Hegel, Michelet, and others have written regarding the development of the idea of freedom, and therefore I need not lengthen this introduction by dealing with it as I have already done with the ideas of progress and humanity.

I have now probably said enough to show why the philosophy of history was so little cultivated until recent times, and to indicate how earlier times prepared for its cultivation. More I have not sought to do.

BOOK I.

FRANCE

CHAPTER I.

BODIN AND CARTESIANISM.

During the middle ages, in France, as elsewhere, historical composition was first cultivated in the monasteries. It was almost a necessity, and it soon became the rule, for each monastery to have at least one scribe or recorder to commemorate whatever happened affecting the interests and obligations of the monastic community; and with these events there gradually came to be associated others of greater moment and wider influence. The records were added to, interpolated, corrected, and even recast, until they satisfied the heads of the institution. Thus grew up the monastic chronicles. And there began early to grow up alongside of them another sort of ecclesiastical chronicles—viz., the biographies of distinguished churchmen and lives of the saints. These naturally led to the biographies of great laymen—of men who were recognised to have done things worthy of being recorded even by the hands of ecclesiastics, although they were never likely to be ecclesiastically canonised. Eginhard or Einhart's life of Charlemagne is one of the earliest and best of these laic biographies.

The famous abbey of St Denis—at the instigation it is thought of Abbot Suger, one of the most remarkable men in French medieval history[1]—took the important step of making a collection of the best and most important chronicles. New ones were added to them as they were composed, and thus the deeds of the kings of France were preserved in the archives of the same sacred building in the vaults of which their bodies reposed.

[1] The best biography of Suger is that of F. Combes—'L'Abbé Suger; Histoire de son Ministère et de sa Régence,' 1853. The sketch in Comte Louis de Carné's 'Etudes sur les Fondateurs de l'Unité Nationale en France' is also excellent.

In this way were formed what were called "the great Chronicles of France," which came down to the reign of Louis XI. Long before the collection was completed, translations of these chronicles into the vernacular began to be made for the laity,—the earliest translated being, of course, the most fabulous of all, the chronicles of the Pseudo-Turpin regarding Charlemagne, a work which is the French counterpart of our Geoffrey of Monmouth's history, and the chief source of the romantic materials so skilfully employed by writers like Boccaccio and Ariosto. What are now called the Chronicles of France or the Chronicles of St Denis are not the Latin originals collected or composed by the monks of St Denis, but the French translation of these works, executed by the monks of St Denis, or under their supervision.[1]

There has been much lamentation over the fact just stated—that until somewhat far on in the middle ages the composition of history was almost exclusively in the hands of the clergy, and especially of the monks. All know how Mr Buckle deplored the circumstance as a great misfortune, and the chief reason for medieval histories being so faulty and absurd as they seemed to him to be. He overlooked—as all those who in the last century uttered the same complaints and accusations overlooked—that but for the clergy history would in these times not have been written at all, and that the writing of history was only confined to churchmen so long as history itself was almost entirely Church history. When secular society really began to have a history of its own, it got historians of its own. I think France was the first country where that took place.

While the monks of St Denis—much to their credit—were composing chronicles in Latin or translating them into French, there began to appear a series of lay chroniclers, who wrote of secular things in a secular spirit and in the vernacular language. I refer to Villehardouin, Joinville, Froissart, Monstrelet, and

[1] On the chronicles of France, both in the older and later use of the name, see the prefaces of M. P. Pâris to his edition of the 'Grandes Chroniques,' and M. de la Curne's "Mémoire sur les Principaux Monuments de l'Histoire de France" in the 'Académie des Inscriptions,' t. xxiii.

Commines. The first of these writers died in 1213, and the last in 1509, so that about three hundred years separated them. England had no lay vernacular histories during the whole period; Italy had none before the fourteenth century. The French works originated in an impulse given by the Crusades, and reflected the spirit of feudalism and chivalry. The earliest—the story of the fourth crusade by one who bore a distinguished part in it, Villehardouin, Seneschal of Champagne and Marshal of Romania—is a fresh and vivid but crude and unpolished recital of events, mostly in themselves highly romantic; an artless record of personal impressions unmixed with personal reflections. In Joinville's 'Memoirs of Louis IX.,' published in 1309, the style is no longer, as in Villehardouin, rough and unpliant, but easy, flowing, and flexible, and capable of expressing reflections and feelings as well as merely conveying events; and the superiority as regards mastery over the materials, the co-ordination of the facts, the disposition of the narrative, is no less decided. Villehardouin is little more than a chronicler; Joinville, as an excellent artist, is much more; and Froissart, who laboured for nearly forty years in the latter half of the fourteenth century on the noble work which has immortalised his name, daily (to use his own words) "rentrant dedans sa forge, pour ouvrer et forger en la haute et noble matière du temps passé," openly claims to be an historian as distinguished from a chronicler. "If I were merely to say such and such things happened at such times, without entering fully into the matter, which was grandly horrible and disastrous, this would be a chronicle, but no history." The history of Froissart describes in detail the great enterprises and deeds of arms done not only in France but in England, Scotland, and Ireland, Spain and Portugal, Germany and Italy, and even Poland and Turkey and Africa, from 1326 to 1400, with a liveliness, garrulity, and natural grace which remind us of Herodotus, with a spiritedness of movement and a splendour and variety of incidents which remind us of Walter Scott. Never had been seen before historical painting on a canvas so broad, so crowded, and so richly coloured. All feudalism is there, and in all its magnificence. Monstrelet, who wrote about half a century later,

connects Froissart with Commines, the confidant and adviser of the politic and unscrupulous Louis XI. That prince played the same part in France which his contemporaries Henry VII. and Ferdinand the Catholic did in England and Spain, in destroying the power of the nobles and raising on its ruins the absolute rule of the monarch. He is the hero of Commines' Memoirs. It is not Charles the Bold but this Louis that Commines admires, not courage but policy, not brilliant feats of arms but successful intrigues. With him, as I have already had to remark, history first became political and reflective.[1]

The sixteenth century brought to France the Renaissance with its passionate study of the ancient classics and Roman jurists, and violent civil and religious strife with its agitation of the gravest social problems. The studious zeal gave rise to various learned treatises, and the strife of parties to countless pamphlets and to numerous memoirs, some of which possessed certain no mean merits. There appeared, however, no general history in France after Commines had closed the series of mediæval historians, until De Thou made a decided step in advance by a work alike remarkable for laborious research and judicial impartiality.[2] But considerably before its appearance there had been published a treatise of which I must proceed to give an account.

The first French writer who took a philosophical view of history was John Bodin. The years between his birth in 1530 and death in 1596 were among the most agitated and eventful in the history of France. They were years of social, political, and religious transition and strife, which pressed on thoughtful minds the questions, Does society rest on any solid foundation of principles, or is it the embodiment of caprice? Has history any laws which the human mind can discover, or is it a labyrinth without a clue? Are the changes of history produced and pervaded by any general reason, or are they determined by mere individual self-will? It was a natural expression of the

[1] On Villehardouin, Joinville, Froissart, and Commines, see the articles of Sainte-Beuve.

[2] On De Thou, see Hallam, 'Lit. of Europe,' vol. ii., and the prize discourses of MM. Patin et Ph. Chasles, 'Sur la Vie et les Œuvres de J. A. de Thou,' 1824.

spirit of the time that not only did political writings abound, but that the theories advocated in them were of the most varied and discordant kinds—all opinions, the most far-sighted and the most short-sighted, the most slavish and the most audacious, finding defenders. But of all those who in that age made government and society the subject of their thoughts, none can be put on an equality with Bodin as regards comprehensiveness, depth, and truthfulness of insight. The noble moral nature of a L'Hôpital enabled him to apprehend as clearly some of the great practical principles of social order, and especially that of religious toleration; but neither L'Hôpital nor any other had as enlarged views of society as an object of science. As a political philosopher, indeed, he had no rival, not only among his contemporaries, but none, at least in his own country, till Montesquieu appeared. He had great native force of intellect; great learning, especially in languages, law, and history; and large legal and political experience, having taught jurisprudence at Toulouse, practised as an advocate in Paris, shared both in Court favour and disgrace under Henry III., performed noble service as a deputy of the Tiers Etat in the assembly of Blois, and filled various important offices of State. It is a striking evidence that even the greatest men may not be exempt from the most irrational prejudices of their age, that this broad and sagacious thinker, although sceptical as to all positive religions, should have been an extremely credulous believer in sorcery, the virtues of numbers, and the power of the stars.

The 'Republic,' first published in 1567, is undoubtedly by far the greatest of Bodin's works;[1] but the 'Historic Method' (Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem), published ten years earlier, has more interest and importance for the student of the philosophy of history. It is not, however, a philosophy of history, nor does it even, although the honour is one which M. Baudrillart has claimed for it, lay the foundation of the

[1] Summaries of the 'Republic' sufficient to give a good general view of its character are to be found in Hallam's 'Lit. of Europe,' vol. ii. (1st ed.), Lerminier's 'Introduction à l'Histoire du Droit,' Heron's 'History of Jurisprudence,' and Bluntschli's 'Geschichte des Staatsrechts;' while that in Professor Baudrillart's 'J. Bodin et son Temp' is so exceedingly careful and excellent, that scarcely a thought of any value in the original has escaped being indicated.

philosophy of history. It makes itself no pretension of the kind; and is what it professes to be, not a philosophy of history, but a method of studying history. It differs from the other "historic methods" of the sixteenth century, not in essence or as to design, but in involving among its practical directions considerations of scientific value.[1] Its aim is simply to teach how history may be read in an orderly, independent, and profitable manner, and not to found, and still less to elaborate, a science; either of which, however, is a great and laborious work, to which even genius is only competent when, circumstances favouring, with conscious and definite purpose, and an exclusive devotion to its fulfilment, it strenuously exerts itself.[2]

Being of the character mentioned, it will not be expected that I should give any general analysis of Bodin's Methodus; it would be, in fact, a deviation from my path, and an unremunerative deviation, not to confine myself to a statement of the ideas which are of interest in the science of history. First, then, the place assigned to human history deserves to be noted. History being understood in the wide sense of true narration or description, human history is one of its three kinds; that which has man for its subject, as natural history has the physical world, and divine history God. The distinctive feature of human history is that its subject is constantly changing, whereas God and nature change not; they remain ever the same, it no instant the same. This its essential characteristic, incessant mutability, has given rise to the belief that no principles pervade it, that no order is to be traced in it, as in the rest of the universe, and the other kinds of knowledge. But that belief, although old and prevalent, is erroneous, for man is a soul in union with a body, an immortal spirit immersed in matter; and so although through the influence of matter there is much which is confused and

1 The 'Penus Artis Historicæ,' a collection of eighteen pieces on the reading and writing of history, all with two or three exceptions belonging to the sixteenth century, was published at Basle as early as 1574.

2 The titles of the chapters are: 1. Quid historia sit, et quotuplex; 2. De ordine historiarum; 3. De locis historiarum recte instituendis; 4. De historicorum delectu; 5. De recto historiarum judicio; 6. De statu rerumpublicarum; 7. Confutatio eorum qui quatuor monarchias aureaque secula statuunt; 8. De temporis universi ratione; 9. Quâ ratione populorum origines haberi possint; 10. De historicorum ordine et collectione.

contradictory in his actions, yet is there in them also eternal principles which reveal a spirit participant of the divine nature, and these principles are capable of being apprehended. It may be thought that there can be no need for going to *human* history for them, that they will be most readily apprehended directly in *divine* history; but no: to reason from the divine down to the human, instead of rising from the human to the divine, is to reverse the true order of study and begin at the end. Man ought to commence his inquiries with himself, and ascend gradually to the supreme and ultimate cause. And as he is a compound being, soul and body, spiritual and material, his history is connected with that both of nature and of God—through geography with nature, through religion with God. The historian of man must take careful account of the complex nature and relationships of man, and trace how his history is influenced both by God and nature, both through spiritual and physical forces.

Again, Bodin has, as I have already had occasion to mention, clearly apprehended and stated the fact that history has been on the whole a course of progress. The seventh chapter of his Method is on this account of special and permanent interest. The first part of it is an argument to the effect that whatever may be meant by the four monarchies of the prophet Daniel—and Bodin professes himself dissatisfied with all the interpretations—it is *not* meant that human history is only a long course of intellectual and moral degradation. Whatever these monarchies may signify, they are not, as some suggested, the four ages of heathen antiquity. The rest of the chapter is a refutation of the view of historical development which underlies the myth of the four ages, the view that mankind has been in a constant movement of degradation from an age of gold to an age of iron, becoming ever harder, more barren of good, and audacious in evil. Our author argues that this view is in contradiction to the Biblical history, which tells us so early of the Flood, the tower of Babel, &c.; that, from all that has been reported to us by heathen poets and mythologers of the gods and heroes of the so called golden age, *it* would seem to have been the true age of iron; that many cruel and unjust customs which prevailed in

the palmiest days of Greece and Rome had come to be seen in their true moral light; that Christianity had brought with it some new virtues which were leavening the world; that even the barbarian invasions could be seen to have fulfilled a providential purpose; that modern times could claim such inventions as the compass and printing, had discovered a new world, and greatly improved astronomy, natural history, medicine, and industry: and he compares the advocates of the continuous deterioration of the race—those who fear that learning, humanity, and justice are on the point of disappearing from the earth to return to their native skies—to old men, sick, sad, and feeble, the burden of whose own infirmities leads them to believe that the world has lost all its beauty, virtue, and goodness, since the days when they were young; and to sailors who should fancy, when launching out from harbour into the open sea, that it was the capes and mountains, the houses and cities, which were withdrawing. It will seem strange to those who are ignorant how slow has been the growth of great ideas, that with so clear a perception of the progress which had pervaded the past, he should have nowhere affirmed that there would be progress in the future. His whole course of reasoning seems to a modern reader to involve, to necessitate, the affirmation; yet nowhere is it made. Nay, instead of it we find phrases (only two, it is true, and these vague and undecided) indicating a belief, or rather suspicion, that human affairs might return to where they had started from, might revolve in a cycle. It was left to a still greater man, born thirty years later, Lord Bacon, to give prominence to the aspect of progress which Bodin overlooked; and it is curious to observe how entirely as to this matter the one was the complement of the other, each seeing only the half-truth. Bodin was singularly just to the past, and loved to dwell on it; he appreciated even the middle ages, which were so misunderstood and calumniated by almost all the reformers both of religion and philosophy. Bacon was most unjust to the past, and quite engrossed with the aspirations, the hopes, the ambitions of the future; like his great contemporary and rival in renown, Descartes, he despised the olden world too much to comprehend it—his eye being riveted on prophetic

visions of the new world which shone before him, "fresh as a banner bright unfurled."

Bodin recognised, however, not only progress in history, but also law. He saw very clearly that history was pervaded by law. He came to this conclusion through his legal studies. These carried his inquisitive and thoughtful mind at every instant to history, and soon convinced him that law and history were inseparably bound together all through from beginning to end—that no part of either was fully intelligible if dissociated from the whole of the other. He sets himself at the very outset—in the very dedication of his 'Historic Method,'—in direct and declared antagonism to those who claimed to be philosophical jurists, and yet confined their whole attention to the law of Rome. A philosophical jurist, and not, like Cujas, a mere interpreter of Latin texts, it was his own ambition to be; and he attacked the narrowness of his renowned contemporary not so much, as Hottoman did, in the interest of practical utility, as of scientific truth. No study of Roman law, he argues, however complete or accurate, can give more than a partial notion of law. It is absurd to make Roman law identical with or the measure of universal law. There is a universal law, in which all codes of law have their root and rationale, and of which they are but the multiple and partial expressions; but to reach that law the historians must be consulted as well as the jurists, in order that Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Hebrews, Spaniards, English, Germans, may all find their due place by the side of the Romans. The idea of universal law, the knowledge of which can be reached only through the methodical study of history as a whole, is central with Bodin, and it is one which still requires to be urged, even in its most general form, on the thoughtful consideration of our lawyers. It is only in its most general form that Bodin has enunciated it; no clear distinction, for instance, being anywhere drawn by him in this connection between natural and positive law.

Bodin, it must be further observed, does not stop short in merely general ideas, but aims at the real explanation of events; does not rest in the abstract, but tries to account for the concrete. He seeks causes and endeavours to trace their operations in the

complex phases of history. He endeavours especially to make apparent the influence of two classes of causes,—physical and political causes. He treats of physical causes with considerable fulness in the fifth chapter of the Method, and in a still more detailed and developed form in the first chapter of the fifth book of the Republic. That climate has an influence on the character of a people, and that there is a certain correspondence between the geography and the history of a nation, are facts so obvious that they could not fail to be noticed very early, and Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Polybius, and Galen stated them explicitly and definitely; but it is altogether unfair to put their general enunciations of the principle that physical circumstances are influential agencies in the origination of national characteristics, on a level with Bodin's serious, sustained, and minute attempt to apply it over a wide area and to a vast number of cases. Dividing nations into northern, middle, and southern, he investigates with wonderful fulness of knowledge how climatic and geographical conditions have affected the bodily strength, the courage, the intelligence, the humanity, the chastity, and, in short, the mind, morals, and manners of their inhabitants; what influence mountains, winds, diversities of soil, &c., have exerted; and elicits a vast number of general views, many of which indeed are false, but many of which also are true. It is less than fair to Bodin to say merely, as Hallam has done, that "there is certainly a considerable resemblance to Montesquieu in the chapter on 'Climates' in the Republic;" and it would even be, I believe, under the truth to say that one half of the propositions maintained in books xiv.-xviii. of 'The Spirit of Laws' are distinctly laid down in that chapter. Bodin certainly added far more to what his predecessors had done than Montesquieu to what he had accomplished; and, when the interval of time between them, and their consequently different opportunities of amassing appropriate knowledge are remembered, his treatment of the subject must be deemed much the more remarkable. Indeed, if less ingenious than Montesquieu, he is as comprehensive, and, at the same time, not chargeable with obscuring the great truth that man is free, and, through his freedom, fortified by virtue and education, can resist and master external agencies.

For his knowledge of the working of political causes Bodin was greatly indebted to Aristotle; but he made use of what that profound and practical thinker taught him in no servile way, and added much from his own reflections, his large acquaintance with history, and his varied personal experience. He divides governments into democracies, aristocracies, and monarchies; and tries to detect and delineate the characteristics and conditions of each—to show how they originate and grow, how they strengthen and consolidate themselves, how they decline, fall, and perish. He distinguishes revolution from anarchy, the former being a change from one kind of government to another, while the latter is the extinction of government; and accordingly finds since the distinct forms of polity are three that the kinds of revolution are six, each polity being capable of change into two others. All the kinds of revolution may take place from different causes, and may be prevented or at least delayed in different ways; and he investigates the manifold causes and counteractives of revolution with care and penetration, and, wherever his astrological superstitions do not lead him astray, with remarkable elevation and soundness of judgment. For his views on this subject—the operation of political causes—the sixth chapter of the Method ought to be compared with the second, third, and fourth books of the Republic, of which it seems almost like a *résumé*.

Perhaps the only other respect in which the Methodus of Bodin can interest the student of historical science is that in its eighth and ninth chapters there is a specimen of what Dugald Stewart has called conjectural or theoretical history. The eighth chapter is an inquiry into the origin of the world and the epochs of time, and the ninth into the origins of nations. Bodin exaggerates the importance, or at least is mistaken as to the proper position, of this sort of research; going even so far as to say that a true idea of the origin of history is the thread which can alone guide us through the labyrinth of history, whereas it is precisely what is most obscure and what must remain longest unelucidated. But as to the mode in which he conducts the research, there is at least as much to praise as to censure. He tries to show by the use of reason alone that the Mosaic account of the origin of the world as a free creation by

God in time, is the true one; criticises in an independent spirit the received divisions of the epochs of history, although he does not succeed in establishing a better of his own; proves how little the statements of historians as to the origins of nations are in general to be relied on; and insists, at considerable length, on the value of the study of etymologies as a means of throwing light on facts relative to which there is either no written testimony or only such as is false.

In 1637—that is, eighty years after the appearance of Bodin's 'Historic Method'—Descartes published his 'Discours de la Methode.' It was composed in the same spirit of opposition to dogmatic authority, traditionalism, and scholasticism, but, of course, with far wider aims; having for avowed end to effect a general revolution in human thought, to determine once for all the method of rightly conducting the reason in the search for scientific truth, and to prove convincingly that it *was* the right method by showing the number and value of the results to which it led. I need not say that the end was accomplished in a remarkable degree; for the name of René Descartes stands by universal consent, along with that of our own Francis Bacon, at the head of the modern epoch of philosophy. With them, the world shook itself finally loose from the grasp of scholasticism, and definitely entered on the path which it is still pursuing. They had many predecessors, among whom were not a few martyrs; but it was given to them only decisively to succeed, partly owing to the labours of others and the ripeness of the time, and partly to the greatness of their own abilities and the merits of their own works.

Vast, however, as was the influence of Descartes, it cannot be said to have done much, directly and immediately at least, for the study of history. Of a science of history Descartes had no notion whatever. He seems to have seen no indwelling reason in society pervading and determining its movements and changes; and has expressly declared his belief that "laws which have grown up gradually as required by national wants, as suggested by experience of the evil effects of particular crimes and disputes, must necessarily be inferior to those which have been

invented and imposed by individual wisdom and authority, just as buildings which different persons have tried to improve by making use of old walls for other than their original purposes must be inferior to buildings designed and executed by a single architect, and just as ancient cities which, from being at first only villages, have grown up in the course of time into large towns, cannot compare in regularity and symmetry with towns which have been built on a uniform plan devised by one person." In fact, Descartes conceived of philosophy in a way which scarcely allowed of there being any philosophy of history, and which led naturally to the neglect and depreciation of all historical study. In historical research the mind is conversant with contingent phenomena, and must content itself with probable evidence. But Descartes placed the criterion of truth in the clearness and distinctness of the convictions of the individual mind, and insisted that reason ought to be satisfied only with necessary truth, and with the conclusions which can be deduced therefrom with mathematical strictness. These views, and his contempt for antiquity, and confidence in his own powers and method, not only prevented his recognising the interest and importance of historical study, but caused him to regard with aversion every kind of erudition which historical study requires. His followers in general entertained the same feeling. Malebranche reproached D'Aguesseau for wasting his time in reading Thucydides. It was only with the decay of Cartesianism that historical science began to flourish in France. And in Italy, early in the eighteenth century, the illustrious Vico is found complaining bitterly that the spread of this philosophy has been ruinous to the cause of learning. Undoubtedly Cartesianism was not essentially favourable to historical study.

I must not leave, however, the impression that it was only unfavourable. On the contrary, it demanded and fostered an independence of mind which is nowhere more needed than in historical inquiry and speculation; it spread among all thoughtful men the conviction that the infinite variety of phenomena in the universe might be reduced to a very few simple laws; and gave general currency to the idea of progress. Descartes shows incidentally in many passages of his writings that he had

looked on social facts with a clear keen eye. And so does Malebranche.[1]

Faith in progress, confidence in the powers of the human mind and in the grandeur of the future destinies of the human race, associated, as in Lord Bacon, with contempt for antiquity, pervade the entire philosophy of Descartes, and frequently find expression in his writings. In Malebranche, both the confidence and the contempt perhaps reached their height; but they may be traced in some measure through all works belonging to the Cartesian school. One of the most illustrious members of that school, the famous Pascal, gave the general notion of progress expression, in words which directly recall statements both of Bacon[2] and Descartes,[3] and which have been quoted times without number. "The whole succession of human beings throughout the whole course of ages must be regarded as a single individual man, continually living and continually learning; and that shows how unwarranted is the deference we yield to the philosophers of antiquity; for, as old age is that which is most distant from infancy, it must be manifest to all that old age in the universal man should not be sought in the times near his birth, but in the times most distant from it. Those whom we call the ancients are really those who lived in the youth of the world and the true infancy of man; and as we have added the experience of the ages between us and them to what they knew, it is only in ourselves that is to be found that antiquity which we venerate in others."[4]

[1] In the 'Philosophische Monatshefte' for October 1869, there is an essay by E. Buss, entitled "Montesquieu und Cartesius: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der französischen Aufklärungsliteratur," which is in this connection both interesting and important. Herr Buss subjects the 'Lettres Persannes' of Montesquieu to a close examination, and finds that a great number of the views contained in them —views which are to be met with again in the 'Esprit des Lois'—were derived from Descartes and Malebranche. I think he has quite failed to establish that English philosophical and political opinion had little influence in determining the character of the 'Esprit des Lois,' or that Montesquieu applied the Cartesian method to the formation of a philosophy of society and government, but he has satisfactorily proved that Cartesian thoughts abound in his works.

[2] Nov. Org., i. aph. 84. [3] Baillet, Vie de Descartes, viii. 10.

[4] The words of the original are: "Toute la suite des hommes, pendant le cours de tant de siècles, doit être considérée comme un même homme qui subsiste et qui apprend continuellement: d'où l'on voit avec combien d'injustice nous

The historian of the idea of progress will find ample materials for a chapter, both amusing and instructive, in a controversy which gave rise to much heat and noise, during the seventeenth century, in France as well as in England,—that as to the relative merits of the ancients and moderns. Some knowledge of its character and course is well worth acquiring, from its being so eminently characteristic of an age almost equally influenced by the reformatory tendencies represented in the Baconian and Cartesian philosophers, and by scholastic and classical traditions. In no former age had men ever dreamt of contesting the superiority of ancient to modern literature. That a large body of men of very moderate abilities and of no extraordinary courage should now have ventured to attack classical authority in the rudest and crudest manner, proved that an enormous change had taken place in human thoughts and habits. A very slight acquaintance with the dispute suffices to warrant the conviction that those who exalted the writers of antiquity and those who depreciated them alike did so on false grounds; the former admiring them for excellences which did not exist, and the latter censuring as defects what were really excellences. It would be out of place to treat here of the merits and demerits of the two parties; it is enough to direct attention to the very obvious circumstance that the controversy turned on the idea of progress, and tended to give prominence to that idea, to insure its circulation, and to make it the subject of reflection and criticism. It naturally found frequent expression in the course of the controversy from those who, like Boisrobert, Perrault, Lamotte, Terrason, &c., took the part of the moderns. Perrault, in his celebrated 'Parallel between the Ancients and the Moderns' (1690), refused to admit that the progressive movement of civilisation had ever met with any real interruption. To the objection that

respectons l'antiquité dans ses philosophes; car, comme la vieillesse est l'âge le plus distant de l'enfance, qui ne voit que la vieillesse dans cet homme universel ne doit pas être cherchée dans les temps proches de sa naissance, mais dans ceux qui en sont les plus éloignés? Ceux que nous appelons anciens étaient véritablement nouveaux en toutes choses, et formaient l'enfance des hommes proprement; et comme nous avons joint à leurs connaissances l'expérience des siècles qui les ont suivis, c'est en nous que l'on peut trouver cette antiquité que nous révérons dans les autres."—Préface sur le Traité du Vide; Pensées, i. 91-101, ed. Faugère.

ages of barbarism had been seen to succeed ages of culture, he replied by the comparison of the arts and sciences to those rivers which, after precipitating themselves suddenly into an abyss, flow for a while underground, but emerge again into the light with undiminished fulness and force.[1]

Fontenelle, whose life of one hundred years' duration connected the great age of French literature under Louis XIV. with that which preceded the Revolution, took part in the discussion, and displayed his characteristic ingenuity. Drawing a sharp distinction between the sciences and the arts, he argued that the former, being dependent on experience, can only be slowly matured, while the latter, being dependent chiefly on liveliness and force of imagination, may attain early and rapidly a very high perfection. He likewise threw out a conception which, although devoid of truth or historical warrant, has a certain interest from having been substantially reproduced by Saint-Simon early in the present century and M. Littré in our own days, both thinkers believing it an important original discovery. The conception as stated by Fontenelle is that the life of each nation has ages corresponding to the ages of the life of an individual. In infancy, both nations and individuals are occupied chiefly with their physical wants; in youth, with poetry and art; and in manhood, with science and philosophy.[2]

[1] His words are: "Cette interruption n'est qu'apparente; on peut comparer les sciences et les arts à ces fleuves qui viennent à rencontrer un gouffre où ils s'abîment tout-à-coup, mais qui, après avoir coulé sous terre, trouvent enfin une ouverture par où on les voit ressortir avec la même abondance qu'ils y étaient entrés. Seulement, il résulte de là divers âges dans l'humanité, qui chacun ont leur enfance et leur progrès."

[2] There is a very learned 'Histoire de la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes' by M. Rigaut. The book of M. Véron, 'Du Progrès Intellectuel dans l'Humanité,' contains much that is ingenious and suggestive on the same subject, with a good deal that is rash and erroneous.

CHAPTER II.

BISHOP BOSSUET.[1]

WHILE Bodin has sometimes, Bossuet has often been called the founder of the philosophy of history. Was he really so? The only difficulty there is as to what ought to be the answer to this question arises from its ambiguity. There are very different views entertained as to what the founding of a science is, and consequently when and by whom any given science is founded Hipparchus, Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, might all have the honour assigned them of founding astronomy, and the discrepancy of the statements be merely verbal. Now, certainly, it is only if we take a very lax view of what constitutes the founding of a science that we shall regard Bossuet as the founder of the philosophy of history. At least a dozen authors before Adam Smith were better entitled to be called the founders of political economy than Bossuet the founder of the philosophy of history. But this instance of Adam Smith may serve to show us, perhaps, when the title of founder of a science is fairly won; and it is too grand a title to be lightly bestowed. The advocates of what is known as the mercantile theory and the French economists had not only discussed more or less all the subjects which the political economist of the present day deals with, but found out various important economical truths. Since, however, the one class of these thinkers saw wealth only in money, and the means of the acquisition of wealth only in manufactures and exportation—and the other class, going to the contrary ex-

[1] Bossuet has, of course, a prominent place in all histories of French literature. His historical philosophy has been touched on by Sismondi, Cousin, Jouffroy, &c., and treated of at greater length but in too severe and polemical a spirit by Mr Buckle (Hist. of Civ. in England, vol. i.) and by M. Laurent (Phil. de l'Histoire).

treme, thought nothing could add to wealth which did not, as it were, call new matter into existence or at least introduce it to the service of man, nothing but agriculture, mining, and fishing; and since, although there was truth in both of these views, both were false in their exclusiveness and no adequate science of wealth could rest on either, while yet, at the same time, there was an idea which underlay both, which included all that was true and repelled all that was false in both, and which *was* capable of sustaining the whole science—the idea, namely, of labour,—Adam Smith, because he first appreciated and proved the significance of that idea, because he first placed it in its true position of corner-stone, became the founder of political economy. He showed that commerce and agriculture are both sources of wealth, since both are means of production by labour; that labour, free labour, is the ultimate source of all wealth, and productive of wealth alike when applied in the cultivation of the land, in manufactures, and in commerce; and that proof of the power and dignity of labour placed political economy for the first time on its true foundation. Most of its doctrines have been modified since, many of them profoundly so, and some have even been reversed; but that has affected only the development of the science, not its foundation—only its evolution, not its constitution. Its foundation is still that on which Adam Smith placed it; its constitution is still that which he gave to it. Now, every science, as well as political economy, has some distinctive and ultimate general fact, until placed on which it is ever unstable and shifting, placed on which it remains firm, and admits thenceforth only of uninterrupted progress; and only the man who discovers the distinctive truth of a science and establishes its real character is properly entitled to be called the founder of the science. This is a test which disposes at once of any claim which can be put in on behalf of Bossuet to that honour. It may be a test so rigid as to make it doubtful if the philosophy of history has yet had a true founder,—it will not leave it doubtful that Bossuet was not the man. For, as we shall presently see, the conception on which he sought to rest it was one on which it could not stand.

The 'Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle,' first published in 1681, was written for the use of the Dauphin of France, to whom

Bossuet was preceptor. Its primary purpose, as its author informs us, was to be to the histories of particular peoples and epochs what a general map is to maps of particular countries,—was to show how nation is bound to nation, generation to generation. It accomplishes this purpose only very imperfectly, since scarcely any relations are exhibited except theological ones; but it is nevertheless characterised by great genius. The simplest sentences place before us the sublimest pictures. Every word is what it ought to be; every line has a majestic grace; and the effect of the whole is ineffably impressive. But the genius displayed is not scientific or philosophical but oratorical genius. The profundity, the penetration, the originality which have been ascribed to the book, I have never been able to find in it. What one really finds are elevation of thought and a magnificent style.

The work consists of three parts. The first is a sketch of history from the creation of the world to the reign of Charlemagne as divisible into twelve epochs, which may be reduced to seven ages. When it is mentioned that the first six of these ages are all founded on Old Testament history, beginning respectively with the creation, the deluge, the call of Abraham, the giving of the Law, the building of Solomon's temple, the restoration of the Jews by Cyrus, it will be understood how completely pagan is sacrificed to Jewish antiquity. The second part is a history of religion, which is regarded as confined to Jews and Christians. The aim of this part is to prove that religion is of all things the oldest, the least changeable, the noblest, and that the Church is the heir of all the ages, guardian and possessor of all spiritual truth; in other words, its aim is practical and apologetic, and not philosophical. The third part contains reflections on the rise and fall of empires, indicating the special secondary causes which under the hand of Providence determined the revolutions of Scythia, Ethiopia, Egypt, Assyria, Media, Persia, Greece, and especially Rome. The two chapters on Rome are not only of remarkable merit for ease and power of description, but for judicious appreciation of the causes of Roman grandeur and decline. They show that Bossuet, if he had not had other aims in his treatise, might have done much for the philosophy of history, and make us regret that he did not, as he purposed to do, compose a second

'discours' on the development of France and the successes and decline of Mohammedanism.

The thought which is central with Bossuet is that a divine hand trains and guides collective humanity for the religion of Christ, which is incorporate in the Church; and that all historical changes may be co-ordinated with reference to a single end, the good of the Church, which is the final cause of the world. This thought, were it not narrowed and specialised more than is warranted, would be just the idea of a divine providence; just the conviction that the Lord reigneth; that the destiny of man is being accomplished under the powerful, wise, and good guidance of the eternal Father. No idea can have a better warrant; no conviction can have a firmer or a broader foundation. The most rapid survey of the past and present seems amply sufficient to verify it. The human race has had a history. Generations after generations have come and gone like the leaves of the forest; but that history has proceeded onwards without break, without stoppage, in obedience to laws the knowledge of which we are only yet groping after. There has been progress, order, plan, from the first day of man's creation down to the present hour, yet man himself has been ignorant of it, and heedless of it. The very conception is a modern one, and is vague, inadequate, and in manifold ways positively erroneous, even in the highest minds of our time. Few have had the slightest glimpse of the order which yet embraced their every action; fewer still have sought to conform to it. From first to last, from the beginning of human history until now, the immense majority of our race have set before them ends of their own, narrow and mean schemes merely for personal good; and yet, although it has been so, and in the midst of confusion, tumult, and war, the order, progress, plan, I speak of, has been slowly and silently but surely built up. God's eternal purpose has stood fast, His decree has been brought about, and yet the men who have accomplished it have not meant to do so; nay, they have been as ignorant of the divine plan they were realising as the bees are of the mathematical principles on which they construct the cells of their honeycombs. Man boasts proudly of his reason. "He is not like the lower

creatures; he knows what he does." Does he? *There* is something he has been doing without knowing it; where his reason has been as blind as any brute's instinct; where all generations and tribes and nations have been, in spite of what opposition their pride and selfishness could give, firmly although unconsciously in God's grasp. When we look up at the heavens and ponder on what science tells us of the systems of worlds above us, all proceeding in their courses with perfect regularity, we cannot but humble ourselves in adoration before a present reigning God; yet all the evidences of His power and wisdom to be traced in the starry firmament, or any other portion of the material universe, ought to impress us much less, perhaps, than the sight of how He brings order and His own holy purpose out of the confusion and conflict of millions of human wills which seek merely their own pleasure and good.

But it does not follow that because an idea is true there can be no use of it which is illegitimate. And to lay this idea of a divine providence, or any other theological idea, as the foundation of a philosophy of history, is an illegitimate use of it. It is to reverse the true relation of science and theology. Religious truths are inferences from scientific laws, not these laws themselves nor the rationale of them. It is only where science ends that religious philosophy begins. The results of science serve as data to religious philosophy. Science shows that certain laws and relations hold among phenomena, and whether the phenomena be inorganic, organic, animate, mental, moral, or social, that is all which science does; it rests in the laws, the ultimate general relations of phenomena, and seeks neither by intuition nor any form of inference to transcend them. It leaves to religious philosophy to go farther and higher if it can, to avail itself of the broadest and latest scientific generalisations, and to consecrate them, to invest them with a halo of celestial glory, by showing that the laws and relations discovered by science—the adjustments and harmonies which prevail throughout creation—are expressions of the thoughts of Infinite Intelligence into communion with which it is permitted us in some feeble degree to enter—are revelations of the character of the Creator. These truths Bossuet has overlooked or disbelieved.

He makes accordingly what is an inference from the philosophy of history its fundamental premiss. He explains by the doctrine of a providence the very conditions from which we conclude the existence of a providence. He does not make an independent application of induction to the facts of history, but he attempts to account for these facts by an article of his theological creed. This is an obviously unscientific process. It is to make what ought to be the apex of an edifice its basis. It is to try to build by beginning at the top. And this radical error is the radical and generative principle of Bossuet's system.

Further, Bossuet not only descends from providence to history instead of rising from history to providence, but he attributes to providence a single and very definite design or thought. He represents the sole aim of providence in history to be the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of Christ he identifies with the Roman Catholic Church. Now, even if he had not thus taken a narrow and erroneous view of the Christian religion, even if he had not thus confounded it with Romanism, his reading of the riddle of providence might be seriously questioned. There is no room, indeed, for reasonable doubt that Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome, as well as Judea, contributed to prepare the way for Christ, for the reception and spread of His Gospel, for the formation and diffusion of a Christian civilisation. That is a fact which not only admits of convincing historical proof, but which has been admirably proved in many recent works—as, for instance, in the introductions to the Church Histories of Neander, Schaff, and Pressensé, and Döllinger's 'Court of the Gentiles.' But Bossuet, like so many before and since, was not content to abide within the safe limits of a statement of facts, or rather, while believing that he was doing so, he maintained instead, as identical with such a statement, an assertion which is in reality very different, far broader, and far more hazardous,—the assertion that the world exists only for the absolutely true religion, that the rise and spread of that religion is the single end or ultimate final cause of all history, the sole ground for the existence of any age or nation. It may be so, but what is our evidence for it? Can we really penetrate so far into the depths of the divine counsels

as to know the full purpose of God in the lives of all nations, in the events of all time? That Egypt, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome were all meant to prepare the way for Christ, we may well maintain, for history proves that they did so; and that Christ's Gospel will yet cover the earth as the waters the sea we may also maintain, for the Scriptures say so; but that these nations, and still more that nations like India and China, so ancient, so populous, so remarkable and peculiar in civilisation, and on which the beams of the Gospel shine so feebly even at the present hour, have existed solely or mainly for Christianity, is an entirely different proposition, and one which we may reasonably question whether either history proves or Scripture affirms. And while it may be thus questioned whether the final end of Providence is what even in this general form it is said to be, when the general form is withdrawn for a special, and the Roman Catholic Church is regarded as equivalent to the Christian religion, room even for doubt ceases, and the questionable gives place to the certainly false. Whether history can or can not prove that humanity exists for Christianity may be a theme for controversy; but nothing in history is surer than that it does not exist for the Church. For some centuries now the whole course of history has been proving *that* conclusively to all who are willing to be taught by it. The successive stages of progress accomplished during these centuries have been marked by the successive and growing deliverance of the state, of art, of literature, and science, of the individual reason and conscience, and the various social activities, from the grasp and authority of the Church. Into her bosom they will never more return. She will never more, like the Church of the middle ages, have their power to yield. It has cost humanity too much to separate each one of them from her sway, and humanity has gained too much by the separation for it to allow of anything of the kind. The Church has lost dominion over all these things for ever, and her loss has been the gain of the world and the gain of religion. With more or less of intelligence and self-denial, all Churches save one have acquiesced in this providential tendency, although it would have been well had they done so with a fuller light, a greater liberality, and a

sincerer self-sacrifice. One Church alone,—and it is that which Bossuet held to be the only Church,—still maintains the old proud pretensions to theocratic powers, and pronounces the whole teaching of the centuries in favour of the secularisation of science and art, literature, philosophy, and politics, a lengthened lie; but what has been the result to herself? What but hopeless obstructiveness, moral corruption, social abhorrence, and political insignificance?

The conception entertained by Bossuet of the final cause of history could not fail to render him unjust towards many nations, could not fail to make him overlook their significance in the world. This injustice has been exposed by Sismondi, Cousin, Buckle, and others who have seen only vaguely the root-principles of it. They have remarked that he says little of Persia, less of Egypt, and nothing of India and China, and has taken no account of art, science, and industry as elements of social life, which is quite enough to show that he was far from realising the comprehensiveness and wealth of history. If he did not see in it only religion, religion was certainly the one element of which he had a clear enough apprehension to be able to trace the development. Nor could he do that otherwise than most imperfectly. For, first, the very notion of development in theology was then scarcely entertained by Protestant, and altogether alien to Catholic divines. And next, he had not, and no man in his time had, sympathy enough with the heathen religions of the world to discern the truths which were in them, their affinities to the human spirit, and their relations to the Christian faith. Classical mythology was then only a mass of discordant and indecent absurdities; the spiritual life of the Eastern world was shrouded in darkness; and the history of Christianity itself had not yet been written with much of critical discrimination, or philosophic insight, or that imaginative sympathy which reanimates and re-embodies the past. It was thus inevitable that Bossuet's attempt to sketch the history even of religion should be defective; and it is simplest justice to him to remember that many things in that history, familiar now even to the unlearned, were undreamt of then even by scholars. It is to be remembered also that Bossuet, in attending chiefly to the reli-

gious element in history, and taking little account of other elements, was exercising a right of choice to which he was entitled. Some of his critics have judged his 'Discours' as if he had undertaken to treat history only as a philosopher, as if he had engaged to write a systematic treatise on the science of history. In that case we should have been warranted to demand that every historical element should be enumerated and estimated at its proper value. But Bossuet made no such profession, entered into no such engagement. He sought primarily not the advancement of science but practical utility, Christian edification; and in order to secure this it was as integral a part of his plan to show the perpetuity and enforce the claims of Christianity as to trace the rise and fall of empires. It is consequently unfair to judge him as if he had professed to be only either an historical philosopher or a philosophical historian.

When speaking of justice in connection with the criticism of Bossuet's Discourse, it is impossible for me to refrain from saying that Mr Buckle's criticism of it appears to me most indefensible. It is true that Bossuet has sacrificed other nations to the Jews; but serious as that error is, it is not more fatal to a truthful estimate of universal history, does not show greater inability to rise to a philosophical view of history, than to see in them only, as Mr Buckle does, "an obstinate and ignorant race, which owed to other peoples any scanty knowledge they ever attained." Bossuet's error lay not in exaggeration of the importance of the Jewish nation in history, but in overlooking the importance of other nations. Even if, in accommodation to the prejudices of those who reject miracle and special revelation, we consent to regard everything in its history, legislation, literature, and religion as merely natural, the Jewish nation will still appear to the intelligent and unbiassed student as the most remarkable in antiquity. Only an eye incapable of distinguishing between outer appearance and inner reality, between material and spiritual greatness, will rank it as lower than even Egypt, Assyria, China, or India. Certainly none of these kingdoms has had a tithe of its influence on the civilisation of Europe. The legislation of Rome, it must be admitted, has affected that of modern states more powerfully than even that of Judea, but the legislation of

Rome alone. It would be difficult to decide whether the political spirit of classical or of Jewish antiquity has worked most influentially in Christendom. As mere literature, the Old Testament is one of the wonders of the world, and, in particular, there is nothing in Greece or Rome, nothing in all the East or West, like its sacred poetry. There was a sense of moral claims and moral wants developed in Israel from very early times such as there was nowhere else before the diffusion of Christianity, which avowedly based itself on Judaism. As a religion, some will contest our right to regard it as a supernatural revelation; but they must surely admit that we are entitled to adapt to it the language in which Aristotle speaks of Anaxagoras, "that the man who first announced that Reason was the cause of the world and of all orderly arrangement in nature, no less than in living bodies, appeared like a man in his sober senses in comparison with those who heretofore had been speaking at random and in the dark;" and to say that the nation which had a pure and elevating moral and monotheistic creed for many centuries before any other had risen above a degrading and fantastic idolatry, pantheism, or polytheism, appears among them as a sober and sane man, awake and in the daylight, in comparison with those who are dreaming, or drunk, or stumbling in the dark. In Judaism both Christianity and Mohammedanism have their roots.

The way in which Bossuet treated Mohammedanism is severely censured by Mr Buckle. He says (vol. i. p. 725-6, 1st ed.), "Every one acquainted with the progress of civilisation will allow that no small share of it is due to those gleams of light which, in the midst of surrounding darkness, shot from the great centres of Cordova and Bagdad. These, however, were the work of Mohammedanism; and as Bossuet had been taught that Mohammedanism is a pestilential heresy, he could not bring himself to believe that Christian nations had derived anything from so corrupt a source. The consequence is that he says nothing of that great religion, the noise of which has filled the world; and having occasion to mention its founder, he treats him with scorn, as an impudent impostor, whose pretensions it is hardly fitting to notice. The great apostle, who diffused among millions of idolaters the sublime verity of one God, is spoken of by Bossuet

with supreme contempt; because Bossuet, with the true spirit of his profession, could see nothing to admire in those whose opinions differed from his own. But when he has occasion to mention some obscure member of that class to which he himself belonged, then it is that he scatters his praises with boundless profusion. In his scheme of universal history, Mohammed is not worthy to play a part. He is passed by; but the truly great man, the man to whom the human race is really indebted is—Martin, Bishop of Tours. He it is, says Bossuet, whose unrivalled actions filled the universe with his fame, both during his lifetime and after his death. It is true that not one educated man in fifty has ever heard the name of Martin, Bishop of Tours. But Martin performed miracles, and the Church had made him a saint; his claims, therefore, to the attention of historians, must be far superior to the claims of one who, like Mohammed, was without these advantages. Thus it is that, in the opinion of the only eminent writer on history during the power of Louis XIV., the greatest man Asia has ever produced, and one of the greatest the world has ever seen, is considered in every way inferior to a mean and ignorant monk, whose most important achievement was the erection of a monastery, and who spent the best part of his life in useless solitude, trembling before the superstitious fancies of his weak and ignoble nature." In order to enable the reader to estimate this criticism at its worth, it is not necessary that I should show that although the Mohammedan was a powerful and in many respects admirable movement, it yet involved no great original idea, the religious truth which it contained and diffused being drawn from Jewish, and the scientific truth from Greek sources; that even if Bossuet had tried and failed to appreciate that movement, his failure ought to be ascribed more to the spirit of his age than to the spirit of his profession; that the meaning of the language actually employed by him is misrepresented and caricatured; or that wrong is done to the memory of Martin of Tours, whose youth and manhood were spent not in useless solitude but in the Roman camp, who, although sharing in the superstitions of his contemporaries, certainly carried into his later life of monk and bishop no weakness or ignobleness of nature, but the tried bravery of a veteran

who had gone through twenty campaigns, enabling him to face death often in his struggle with Celtic and Latin paganism, and a Christian dignity conspicuously displayed before an emperor surrounded with episcopal adulations, and who is known not only as the founder of a monastery but as the advocate of religious toleration, as a man who protested by word and deed against the intervention of secular power in religious matters, and branded with his solemn reprobation the bishops who took part in the persecution of the heretic Priscillian and his disciples; —not necessary for me to prove any of these facts, which it would be easy to do, as there are two still more conclusive as to the rashness and unfairness of Mr Buckle's accusation—viz., first, that all that Bossuet has written in his 'Discours' about Martin of Tours is *just the two lines which Mr Buckle quotes;* and next, that at the end of that discourse he informs us he meant to write *another* in order to explain the history of France *and the rise and decline of Mohammedanism,*—"Ce même discours vous découvrira les causes des prodigieux succès de Mahomet et de ses successeurs: cet empire, qui a commencé deux cents ans avant Charlemagne, pouvait trouver sa place dans ce discours; mais j'ai cru qu'il valait mieux vous faire voir dans une même suite ses commencements et sa décadence." It would almost seem as if it might be as difficult for a nineteenth century positivist to be completely just to a seventeenth century Catholic bishop, as for the latter to appreciate truthfully the great qualities of an Arabian "faux prophète."

CHAPTER III.

MONTESQUIEU.[1]

Bishop Bossuet's 'Discourse on Universal History' appeared in 1681. The next French work to be noticed, Montesquieu's 'Spirit of Laws,' appeared in 1748,—sixty-seven years later. In these sixty-seven years a great change had come over France; she had both learned and unlearned much. New truths had arisen,—other forces were at work,—a different order of aspirations had taken possession of men's hearts. When Bossuet wrote, the slavery of mind in France was amazing. There were few nobler spirits in it than his own; and yet how low we find him stooping, how sadly forgetting the true nature of the religion whose minister he was, when in the temple of God he adulates a monarch of the moral character of Louis XIV. in language which it would have been profane to have applied even to the greatest and most virtuous of men. It was language, however, in which there was nothing exceptional. The daily atmosphere in which Louis XIV. lived was one filled with the incense of semi-divine honours. The throne was regarded with a servile and idolatrous reverence which it is difficult now to realise. Under the shadow of the throne, and in close alliance with it, there flourished the tyranny of the Church. No opposition was offered or so much as thought of to either. The most abject submission was demanded and unmurmuringly rendered. When Montesquieu wrote, the chief representatives

[1] There is a good Étude on Montesquieu by Bersot. Lerminier, Heron, Bluntschli, and other historians of law and politics, have expounded his legal and political philosophy. Auguste Comte and Sir G. C. Lewis have made some most valuable remarks on his historical views, by which I have endeavoured to profit. The general sketch of his literary character in Demogeot is short but admirable (Hist. de la Litterature Française, 514-521).

of the French mind were actively engaged in trying the existent constitutions both of Church and State by the test of reason, and finding neither abiding the trial well. The disgraces abroad and the miseries at home which despotism had brought upon the nation, the combination of intellectual incompetency and moral corruption which, after the death of Louis XIV., characterised both the court and the clergy, the advance of scientific knowledge, acquaintance with the literature of England,—these and other causes had raised a strong reaction against the old absolutism in religion and politics, and by 1748 all the more influential literary men of the time belonged to it. Reason had fairly wakened up to the recognition of its own rights, and was diligently at work examining into the foundations on which religious beliefs and political practices rested. One of the ways in which the new spirit manifested itself was by a more independent and penetrating treatment of history. This is amply exhibited in three works which appeared at no great distance in time from one another: the 'Spirit of Laws,' just mentioned as published in 1748; Turgot's 'Discourses at the Sorbonne,' published in 1750; and Voltaire's 'Essay on the Manners and Spirit of Nations,' published in 1756.[1]

The 'Spirit of Laws,' the ripest product of Montesquieu's genius, the result of twenty years' reading, travel, and thought, was preluded by the 'Lettres Persanes,' which gave evidence of a singular faculty for the description and analysis of social life, habits, and motives, and the 'Considérations sur les Causes de la Grandeur des Romains et de leur Décadence,' which is even at the present day one of the most remarkable of the numerous studies to which the surpassing interest of Roman history has given rise. This latter work would have compelled us to take account of Montesquieu, even if he had written no other, al-

[1] It may be useful here to mention that the chief work on the history of French philosophy during the eighteenth century is that of Damiron, 'Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Philosophie au xviii^e. siècle;' and that the two histories of general literature for the same period which have, perhaps, the highest reputation, are H. Hettner's 'Litteraturgeschicte des 18. Jahrhunderts,' ii. Theil, and Nisard's 'Hist. de la Littérature Française,' t. iv. But, of course, there are whole libraries of books, good, bad, and indifferent, on the philosophy, literature, and history of the eighteenth century.

though with 'L'Esprit des Lois' before us we may dispense with a separate examination of it.

The title of Montesquieu's *magnum opus* expresses well its central and pervading conception. The work is an attempt to discover the *spirit* of laws, to explain them, to trace how they are related to manners, climates, creeds, and forms of government. It is an attempt to view them in all lights in which they can be viewed, so as to show how they arise, how they are modified, how they act on private character, on domestic life, on social forms and institutions, and, in a word, so as to elicit their full meaning. This conception, it will be observed, is entirely different from that of Bossuet. He took a theological doctrine to begin with, and tried to show how all history had been the exemplification of it. He started, that is to say, with a doctrine which he had not derived from history, and that doctrine he introduced into history as a principle of explanation. It is quite otherwise with Montesquieu. He assumes no doctrine extraneous to history itself. He begins with the facts of history themselves, with the positive laws which either are or have been on the earth. He seeks merely to account for these laws as so many historical facts. The difference between these two conceptions is very great, and obviously, so far as science is concerned, that of Montesquieu is far in advance of that of Bossuet. Scientifically, the method of Bossuet is radically wrong,—that of Montesquieu is good so far as it goes.

But how has Montesquieu elaborated and applied his conception? He has done so in various respects, with great success and ability. He had a genuine love of history for its own sake, and a singularly keen historic insight; he had a calm, unprejudiced, fair mind; he was distinguished by a liberality and moderation of feeling and judgment, which, while it did not exclude a true though tempered zeal for human good, gave him the breadth, and steadiness, and dispassionate clearness of view which his subject demanded. No one is less chargeable than Montesquieu with what was a common fault among his contemporaries, one-sidedness, philosophical sectarianism, perversion of social facts from contempt of them or to serve a party purpose. He has accordingly arrived at least at approximate ex-

planations of a host of social phenomena. The harvest of results obtained was well worth his twenty years of labours. The 'Spirit of Laws' not only enjoyed an immediate popularity which carried it through twenty-one editions in eighteen months, not only exerted a vast and beneficial practical influence, but will always retain, owing to the comprehensiveness, penetration, and ingenuity of the treatment of its great theme, a distinguished place among the few works which have advanced most the most difficult of sciences.[1]

There lay, however, a danger before Montesquieu which he has not safely escaped, a difficulty which he has not overcome. It was that of looking on laws too much as isolated facts, as independent phenomena, as stationary and complete existences. It was that of ignoring the relation not only of one law to another, but of one stage of law to another, and of the relation of each stage and system of law to coexistent and contemporaneous stages and systems of religion, art, science, and industry. Social phenomena such as laws are, cannot be explained like the merely physical phenomena of natural philosophy and chemistry. The most distinctive characteristics which they possess lie in their capacities of continuous evolution or development; and it is only by the study of their evolution, by the comparison of their consecutive states, and of each state with the coexisting general conditions of society, that we can rationally hope to reach an adequate knowledge of their laws. It is here that we find the chief weakness of Montesquieu. He was most industrious in the collection of facts, and he had a

[1] There has been much discussion as to the originality of Montesquieu. I believe him to have been highly endowed with that most valuable sort of originality which enables a man to draw with independence from the most varied sources, and to use what he obtains according to a plan and principles and for a purpose of his own,—the originality of Aristotle and Adam Smith. He has been suspected to have owed much to Vico, and to have concealed his obligations. The suspicion only proves that those who entertained it had little knowledge of either author. Montesquieu may possibly have read Vico's work; if so he certainly had not been much impressed by it. His most serious defects are just those which a careful study of Vico might have removed. The range of his obligations was, however, very wide, including the classical writers, the Protestant pamphleteers of the sixteenth century—such as Hotman, Languet, &c., Bodin, Charron, Machiavelli and Gavina, Descartes and several of his school, Locke and other English writers, particularly on politics—physicists, travellers, &c.

quite marvellous quickness and keenness of intuition into the meaning of them, but he had no appropriate scientific method, no definite notion of the modifications of the inductive process which the peculiarities of historical phenomena render necessary. He made little use, no systematic use, of what is, however, *par excellence, the expedient* of historical philosophy, the comparison of coexistent and consecutive social states. He paid always little attention, generally none, to the chronology of his facts, which is, of course, the indispensable condition of their comparison. The reason was that he did not perceive the importance of comparing them, of following them through the whole course of their evolution; but that is only saying in other words that he attempted to construct a science without availing himself of the only method by which it could be done. It would be unjust, however, to censure severely this error of Montesquieu, although it is fatal to his system as a complete explanation of the class of social phenomena with which it deals; for while true that Bodin had on this fundamental point more comprehensive and philosophic views, we may well excuse any man of the eighteenth century for ignorance the most entire of the science of comparative legislations, which, like the comparative study of religions, belongs to the nineteenth century, and is, perhaps, still less advanced than that is. It is certainly even less known in this country, the lawyers and clergy of which are equally unentitled to cast stones at each other for unacquaintance with the philosophy of their professions.

Devoid of a true method of investigation, Montesquieu could not, except by chance, discover the general laws which connect social facts. The laws of history are laws of development, and if we ignore the development of any fact, we can never discover the law according to which it has come to be what it is. What then has Montesquieu discovered? Not the general laws of the facts, but certain special reasons of them. That was to a considerable degree possible to him, notwithstanding the neglect of the distinctive characteristics of social phenomena. Where a general law could not be reached, an intellect keen in its intuitions might still detect a force or forces in which some given law or

custom had its origin; and this was what Montesquieu had a rare degree of success in doing. His quickness of perception, his suggestiveness of thought, his intimate acquaintance with the workings of human motives, and the extent of his reading in history, travels, and natural science, gave him a quite marvellous power of conjecture, and enabled him to arrive at approximate explanations of social usages and laws in a vast number of cases where another man would have been helpless. Still no faculty of guessing, however extraordinary and felicitous, can supply the place of scientific method, or elicit much historical philosophy not of the humblest kind. And although it may happen to be, as it was in Montesquieu, fertile in a kind of truths, it will not fail to be fertile also in illusions. If it often seize a verity, it will often likewise impose on itself a fancy. It is only a sound method which is competent to the uniform and consistent discrimination of truth from error. This is fully exemplified in the case of Montesquieu, no serious student of whose work will deny that it abounds in false as well as in correct generalisations. It is rich in truths, yet crowded with errors. It is scarcely more exuberant in the one respect than in the other. The want of a scientific method of investigation is the source of the confused arrangement, the structural disorder of the book. There are, it is true, those who have not recognised this defect, who have even denied that it exists, and praised the plan as simple and grand; but that only proves that they have studied it superficially. There is an outward order of a loose kind, and an imposing appearance of order; but all the order there is is of the outward and surface kind, while the confusion is internal, and so all-pervading that examination finds no end to it. Thoughts are juxtaposited not organically connected, because they have been amassed merely by industrious collection and fertility of suggestion, and not elicited and combined by scientific Method. The same want, and the consequent dealing with laws and customs as isolated and fragmentary phenomena, and reference of them to particular causes not to general laws, have exposed Montesquieu to the commonest charge brought against him,—that of confounding fact with right, the explanation of a thing with its justification. This charge has been often expressed in an exaggerated way.

Perhaps it should be even, on the whole, held unproved, and Montesquieu absolved. It is certainly not applicable to him in the same degree as to Aristotle, or, to take a modern name, Mr Buckle. The frequently recurring phrase "ought to be" is ambiguous and objectionable, but is clearly meant to express not a moral or rational necessity, but only that sort of actual necessity which there always is between a cause and its consequence. His mode of investigation, however, tended towards the serious confusion imputed to him, and he has certainly on several occasions been far from careful to guard himself from the suspicion of having fallen into it.

The subject of Montesquieu's book being laws, he very properly begins with two chapters of general considerations on the nature of laws; but these two chapters are unfortunately, although they have been repeatedly eulogised beyond measure, by no means satisfactory. The language of them is so vague as to apply, when it does apply, not only to all kinds of laws, physical and moral, natural and positive, proper and metaphorical, but to many things which never go even by that name. There is no attempt to disentangle the perplexing ambiguities of the term law; no attempt to distinguish and define the different kinds of laws. And underlying this confusion there is, in particular, the vaguest and even an erroneous conception of the nature of an inductive law. These two chapters show, what the whole treatise confirms, that Montesquieu had no clear or correct conception of what such a law is. To those who have never tried to trace the history of ideas this may seem incredible; to those who have, it will be in no wise strange. A distinct, consciously realised notion of law in its present scientific acceptation was unknown to Greece, Rome, or the middle ages. Of the seven meanings which Aristotle attributes to the word principle, not one answers to the modern scientific signification of law; and of the thirty terms defined in the fourth book of his Metaphysics,—which is a sort of philosophical glossary,—law does not occur. Law was thought of by the ancients as a type or idea with something external corresponding to it. And Montesquieu's thought was no closer, no more definite, than that laws were "the necessary relations which arise out of the nature of things." A meta-

physician or theologian may be satisfied with that, but certainly no student of inductive science, physical, psychical, or social. With no practical workable notion of what an inductive law was, it was not to be expected that Montesquieu should be eminently successful in discovering such laws. But notwithstanding all their defects, it must be admitted that these two chapters have the great merit of insisting that social institutions and regulations are properly no mere arbitrary inventions, but ought to rest on reason, on the nature of things; that there are relations of equity which human legislation does not create but presuppose; that, varied as are the forms which society assumes, they all originate in and are pervaded by the principles of a human nature common to all men: and the farther merit that along with this recognition of fundamental unity there is the clearest recognition likewise of superstructural variety, and of the necessity of laws being adapted to the distinctive peculiarities of each nation and age, these peculiarities being, in the opinion of Montesquieu, of such decisive importance that the laws which are good for one people will rarely suit another. He thus separates himself on the one hand from the empty abstract theorist, and on the other from the rude literal empiricist, and seeks the golden mean of political wisdom.

By the spirit of a law, Montesquieu means the whole of the relations in which that law originates and exists. A most important order of these relations comprises those in which laws stand to the various kinds of governments; and this order of relations is the general subject of not fewer than nine books, besides being frequently returned to in others. Montesquieu divides governments into monarchies, in which a single person governs by fixed laws—despotisms, in which a single person governs according to his own will—and republics, in which the sovereign power is in several hands, being a democracy when the nation as a whole, and an aristocracy when only a part, shares therein; endeavours to characterise these various governments, to discover their principles or motive forces, and to show what laws flow from their respective natures, what are the sources of their strength and weakness, the systems of education most suitable to them, and the causes of corruption most power-

ful in them; and how with the variations of their respective genius, the civil and criminal codes, sumptuary laws, and laws relative to women, and the military arrangements both for offensive and defensive war must likewise vary; and in doing so arrives at a large number of consequences, often very remote and heterogeneous consequences, which he expresses mostly in the form of general and absolute propositions. Probably more of these propositions are false than true. But there is in this part of the work a still greater defect than the commingling of true and false conclusions, that, in fact, which is its source, the blending and consequent confusing of two methods. If we wish to ascertain the character and consequences of monarchy, for example, we may proceed in our search either by induction or deduction. In the former case we endeavour from an examination of all monarchies to generalise what is common to them in virtue exclusively of being monarchies. In the latter case we start from a definition which embodies what we suppose to be the distinctive nature of monarchy, and logically evolve what it implies. If in the former case the induction be sufficiently extensive and careful, and if in the latter the presupposition involved in the definition be warranted and the deduction rigorous, the results of the two methods should so coincide as to afford mutual verification; but in order to this the two processes must be kept separate and distinct—inductions must not be passed off as deductions, nor *vice versâ;* the ideal and the empirical must not be allowed to coalesce until they meet at the definitive point of union,—in essential reality. If Montesquieu had either done so, or adhered strictly to either method, he would certainly never have arrived at so many general theorems. With every extension of his inductive basis, and every effort at rigid verification, he would have found many of them drop away, and learned that it was an extremely difficult task to detect the characteristics which are the pure results of the form of government. With a clear consciousness that the greater part of his reasoning was deduction from hypothetical premisses, and that consequently his inferences, however correctly drawn, had only logical and not actual validity, except in so far as the hypotheses assumed were in accordance with fact, he would

have felt bound strictly to inquire whether they were so or not, and would probably have speedily perceived that monarchies, despotisms, and republics, as defined by him, had merely an ideal existence—that his definitions, and the classification on which they rested, had nothing either in the history of the past or present corresponding to them otherwise than most remotely. It was because he kept neither to induction nor deduction, but passed from the one process to the other, or blended the one with the other in an illegitimate way, that conclusions came to him so easily. It was thus that he was able, on the one hand, to believe himself describing what was, extracting and concentrating the legislative experience of mankind when merely making affirmations about abstractions; and, on the other hand, to raise narrow empirical generalisations almost to the level of necessary truths, so that the peculiarities of the French monarchy are transformed into essential attributes of monarchy, the peculiarities of the oriental despotisms into universal attributes of despotism, and the peculiarities of the Greek republics into universal attributes of republicanism.

The relation of laws to liberty as regards the political constitution, the security of the citizen, and taxation, is the subject of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth books, which are all celebrated, and especially the eleventh, with its theory of the three powers, and its indirect eulogy of the British constitution;[1] but

[1] Professor Rudolf Gneist, the most learned and acute Continental student of the British Constitution and its history, says: "The first edition of Montesquieu's 'Spirit of Laws' appeared in 1748, at a time when there was as yet no account of the constitutional law of England which a foreigner could understand. The first edition of Blackstone's 'Commentaries' appeared in 1765, and proceeded in many respects on the fundamental results reached by Montesquieu. The subsequent editions of these two celebrated works went henceforth side by side as the chief sources from which politicians took their views of constitutionalism. The sources from which Montesquieu drew were, unmistakably, the party pamphlets of the Whigs and Tories under George II., in which, from love to the Revolution of 1688, the original legal bases of the constitution were already, with the silent consent too of both parties, entirely displaced. The French commentators on Montesquieu went no farther back at the utmost than to certain citations from Blackstone, without ever in any way troubling themselves to try to comprehend the legal coherence and connection of the English political system."—Der Rechtsstaat., 189. De Lolme, whose well-known book, 'The Constitution of England,' first appeared in 1775, and completely elaborated the views of Montesquieu, was a native of Geneva. It is an instructive fact, in more ways

they concern the historical philosopher less than the five books which follow them, and which treat of the effect of physical agencies on social institutions and changes. What are the influences of which the presence would be most easily detected in laws and customs by a thinker with no better method of investigation than that which Montesquieu had? There can be only the one answer: physical influences. Of the forces which act on man and shape his destiny, none are so conspicuous, and, we may almost say, palpable. Well, it was principally by them that Montesquieu sought to explain history. How has civilisation been modified by the action of the external world? How are the laws of a people and the other products of its social and moral life connected with temperature, soil, and food? That is the fundamental problem for Montesquieu, to the solution of which he devotes all his strength.

It would be absurd to say that he has solved it. We know only very imperfectly, even at present, the influence of physical agencies on man's development. The meteorologist, chemist, physiologist, ethnologist, and political economist, have all much to discover, before the historical philosopher will be able to pronounce an adequate decision on this large and important question. The errors into which Montesquieu has fallen appear to be chiefly two. And, first, he has drawn no decided distinction between the direct and the indirect influence of physical causes, which is a quite fundamental distinction. The direct or immediate action of climate, soil, and food is probably feeble, and its working is certainly very obscure. Our knowledge of it is both little and dubious. Perhaps, indeed, not a single general proposition regarding it has yet been conclusively established. The indirect influence, on the other hand, or that which physical agencies exert through the medium of the social wants and activities which they excite, is very great, and since the time of Montesquieu not a little has been done in the way of tracing it. The advance of geographical knowledge, for instance, on one side, and of the science of political economy on another, now permits us to survey, with a comprehensiveness and clearness

than one, that what has long been the accepted theory of the English constitution should have been mainly the work of two Frenchmen.

impossible in the time of Montesquieu, the whole range of relationships between geographical and economical facts, and with the latter of these no one will deny that all the higher orders of social phenomena are intimately associated.

The error just indicated is closely connected with another. The direct action of physical agencies must obviously be a necessary mode of action,—one which is independent of volition,—one in which the man is passive. The indirect action, on the contrary, presupposes a reaction on man's part, and a development of his nature under the stimulus of the wants and in virtue of the activities proper to it. The confusion of the two forms of action must therefore tend to obscure the great fact of human freedom. It has undoubtedly done so in the case of Montesquieu. For although it be true that he has explicitly affirmed his belief in free agency, and repudiated fatalism, he cannot be exonerated from having at times forgotten the profession in his practice; from having if not directly stated at least frequently suggested the inference that laws are the creatures of climate; from having exhibited the nature of man as far more plastic and passive under external influences than it is. Thus he represents the peoples of tropical regions as having been doomed by the overmastering power of physical forces to inevitable slavery and misery. Now there is no doubt that physical conditions have had much to do with the slavery and misery of tropical countries. Where outward nature is exuberant, gigantic, and terrible, she is apt to depress, paralyse, and overpower man, and to give rise to an unequal distribution of wealth, an excess of imagination, and a prevalence of superstition, socially pernicious. But while this is true it is only half the truth, and it will be practically a falsehood if separated from its correlative truth that the influence of physical forces on human life is not absolute but relative; that they are advantageous or the reverse, beneficial or pernicious, according to the wealth and knowledge, and still more according to the energy and virtue of those on whom they act; that it is not, in strict propriety of speech, nature which is ever at fault, but always man. "It is not nature," says a thoughtful writer, "which is in India too grand—not nature which is in excess, but man who is too little, man who is in defect. Man there is

not what he ought to be, not what he was meant to be, not properly man; he wants the intellect and the energy, the love of truth, the sense of personal dignity, the moral and religious convictions which enter into the constitution of true manhood, and therefore it is that nature acts as his enemy: but let him have these, give him these, and nature will come round to his side at once. Nature is no man's enemy except in so far as he is an enemy to himself."[1]

If a tendency to fatalism, however, makes itself felt throughout these books, the corrective and remedial truth is not far to seek, but established and applied in the very next book, which treats expressly of laws in relation to the principles which form the general spirit, the morals, and manners of a nation. Savages are either wholly devoid or very slightly participant of a general spirit, and in consequence are swayed and determined irresistibly by physical forces; but every civilised people is pervaded by a common spirit, which is in fact but another word for the whole of its civilisation, and which is the substance of its life, the chief source of its actions, carrying along with it those who are unconscious of it, and those even who wish to resist it, incapable of being changed otherwise than slowly and by the concurrence of many agencies, and feebly modifiable by laws while so powerfully operative on them as to be able to make them either honoured or despised. In this book there is the enunciation, proof, and varied application of the great principle which Montesquieu had already exemplified in so masterly a manner in the 'Grandeur et Décadence des Romains;' the epoch-making principle that the course of history is on the whole determined by general causes, by widespread and persistent tendencies, by broad and deep undercurrents, and only influenced in a feeble, secondary, and subordinate degree by single events, by definite arguments, by particular enactments, by anything accidental, isolated, or individual. The recognition of this principle is an essential condition of the possibility of a science of history. To deny it is to pronounce every notion of such a science absurd; to affirm it is to express the conviction that with the requisite

[1] The late Mr M'Combie, of Aberdeen: 'Modern Civilisation in relation to Christianity,' p. 50, 51.

exertion the science will not fail to arise; to act on and apply it is to labour in its construction. It was a high service, therefore, to historical science, that Montesquieu apprehended this principle with a clearness and comprehensiveness of view, and illustrated it with an ingenuity and truthfulness, which has perhaps not been surpassed since. Books like Matter's 'Mœurs et Lois' and Lecky's 'History of Rationalism,' although admirable as expositions and confirmations of Montesquieu's thought, have not perhaps essentially added to the thought itself. I need scarcely say that the practical value of that thought is even greater than its scientific value, and that the nations of the world would have been saved from incalculable disappointment and misery if they had realised its truth, had seen and felt that positive institutions and laws are far more the effects of a nation's character than its causes, and that it is vain to expect any good from transferring the laws and institutions of one nation to another differing from it in race, mental and moral qualities, historical antecedents, and physical conditions.

The four books which follow, dealing with commerce, with money, and with population in their relation to laws and social changes, may be regarded as composing a group, and may be read in connection with the thirteenth book, which treats of the relations which the revenues and taxation of a nation have with its liberties. These books introduced the economical element into historical science,—an immense service, whatever be their errors of economical theory. It is incorrect to ascribe the honour of this service, as has been done, to Turgot, or Condorcet, or Saint-Simon, or Comte. It is mainly due to Montesquieu. Of course, in order not to give him more than his due, we must remember that economical science had when he wrote come to be actively cultivated in France; that Vauban, Boisguilbert, Dutot, and Melon had published important works on it; and that Quesnay and the other founders of the famous physiocratic school were his contemporaries. The science of political economy, in fact, was then passing through one of the most interesting periods of its history, one which reflected a change in the history of society itself, which corresponded to a great national movement, the eager throwing off by France of her

feudal and theocratic bonds, and her eager leap towards a secular and industrial polity. It was only natural that Montesquieu should have fallen into a considerable number of errors on economical subjects which were shortly afterwards convincingly exposed, and failed to observe a considerable number of truths which were shortly afterwards conclusively established, by Quesnay, Adam Smith, and their disciples. He occupied a very important place in the history of political science; but it was just where two orders of economical ideas, two systems, met and crossed each other, the old not yet dead and the new only struggling into life; and this is the explanation of almost all the inconsistencies and errors which have been discovered in his views on such subjects as trade, taxation, money, and population. The old principles and the new—those of mercantilism and those of physiocracy—both ruled in his mind, and he was unable to make a decisive and consistent choice between them; he was both for the prohibitive system and free trade, notwithstanding that they were contraries. Those who wish to know what errors of this kind he committed, and to see them, or at least the greater number of them, clearly and solidly refuted, cannot do better than read that part of M. Destutt de Tracy's valuable 'Commentaire de l'Esprit des Lois,' which corresponds to the books on economical subjects in Montesquieu's work. They will learn that his errors were neither few nor small; and yet, unless inconsiderate and unjust, will not deny him on account of them the honour of having first, in a masterly, and, on the whole, successful way, brought together economical and historical science and constrained them to co-operate in the explanation of social phenomena.

The two books which trace the influence of religious beliefs and institutions on laws and government, although far from an adequate treatment of their great theme, are eminently judicious so far as they go. They recognise the necessity and importance of Religion and Revelation, and with a warmth and reverence markedly in contrast to the tone of the 'Lettres Persanes.' Reflection, study, and experience had convinced Montesquieu of the folly of his earlier opinions and feelings, and opened his eyes to the merits of Christianity, and especially to the number and

magnitude of its services to society. Perhaps the chief errors in these two books, as in the preceding book—that on population—regard matters of fact. As it is simply not the case that in warm climates the proportion of male to female births is materially different from what it is in cold climates, and polygamy can consequently be accounted for in no such way, so neither is it the case that orientals are indifferent about religion except in so far as religious change may involve political change, and hence reasoning to and reasoning from that supposition are alike in vain.

The twenty-sixth and twenty-ninth books concern the jurist much more than the historical philosopher. It is otherwise with the twenty-seventh book, which is on the Roman laws of succession—the twenty-eighth, which is on the origin and revolutions of the civil laws among the French—and still more the two books on the feudal system with which the work closes. These are not less interesting to the student of the philosophy of history than of the science of law. Although numerous errors of fact and theory have been detected in them, although no longer of authority, they display a kind of learning which was very rare and difficult to acquire in the age of Montesquieu, and an originality and power of historical combination rare in any age, and not to be acquired by any one unless endowed by nature with the highest form of historical genius. They were worthy preludes to the researches by which they have been superseded,—those of Hugo and Savigny, Gans and Lassalle, Thierry and Guizot, and so many other illustrious scholars.

CHAPTER IV.

TURGOT.[1]

THE 'Spirit of Laws' was only completed when its author was sixty years of age, and after he had spent on it twenty years of toil. The work next to be noticed consists simply of two Academic Discourses delivered at the Sorbonne in 1750 by a young man of twenty-three, and some sketches or conspectuses written by him either when a student or shortly after. That young man was, however, Anne Robert James Turgot, to whom impartial history will accord the honour of being one of the wisest and best men of the eighteenth century. He was pure and noble in his private life, a zealous philanthropist, an enlightened philosopher, a humane and able governor, a sagacious statesman. He was the friend of all true progress, but he avoided and reproved the excesses which were advocated in its name. He saw and abhorred the sins of the Church, but they did not hide from him the beauty of religion. He discriminated, as perhaps no other of his contemporaries did, not even Montesquieu, between the good and evil in social institutions, and between the essential and accidental in all things. When old institutions are crumbling and society is out of joint, when anarchy prevails

[1] The following are the best works which I have met with on Turgot. 1°. 'Turgot, sa Vie et sa Doctrine,' par A. Mastier, docteur ès lettres. This volume is divided into three parts: the first treats of the private and public life of Turgot; the second expounds his opinions on metaphysical, moral, philosophical, and historical subjects; and the third examines these opinions, and compares them with those of his predecessors and contemporaries. It is characterised by careful research into facts, and a judicious appreciation and criticism of doctrines. 2°. An admirable 'Eloge de Turgot' by M. H. Baudrillart. 3°. Two lectures by Profesor Hodgson of Edinburgh—'Turgot: His Life, Times, and Opinions'—which it would be difficult to praise too highly. And 4°. An able essay by Mr John Morley in his 'Critical Miscellanies.'

and ruin is near, Providence fails not to send wise and conciliatory men who speak the truth in love, and whose warning voice, if listened to, might go far to avert the impending catastrophe. But stolidity, self-confidence, and passion generally prevent its being heard, and then rougher messengers and a sterner message are sent. Turgot was a messenger of mercy to the royalty, nobility, and clergy of France, at a time when the forces of democracy were rapidly mustering for their destruction; but his counsels and efforts were in vain, and so Mirabeau and Danton had to follow him.

It would be unfair to Montesquieu to put the sketches of Turgot on a level with his own elaborate work; unfair indeed to both to compare or contrast works so different in character and in the circumstances of their production. But it is hardly possible to deny to Turgot a superiority as regards general conceptions, and especially as regards the conception of human progression. There, where Montesquieu is comparatively feeble, Turgot is extremely strong. None before him and few after him have described so well how age is bound to age, how generation transmits to generation what it has inherited from the past and won by its own exertions. The notion of progress is apprehended by him with a fulness as well as clearness which will be sought in vain in Bodin, Bacon, Pascal, Leibnitz, or any other predecessor. In him, what we find is no longer a simple affirmation or general view, the identification of progress with the advance of knowledge, or with anything which can be predicated merely of specially favoured nations or privileged classes; but it is a something which embraces all space and time, which includes all the elements of life, and in which the race as such is meant to participate. The progress of humanity means, according to Turgot, the gradual evolution and elevation of man's nature as a whole, the enlightenment of his intelligence, the expansion and purification of his feelings, the amelioration of his worldly lot, and, in a word, the spread of truth, virtue, liberty, and comfort more and more among all classes of men: and he seeks to prove from the whole history of the past that as there has been so will there continue to be such progress, and as a picture of universal history taken from this high and hopeful

point of view his sketch has never been surpassed, nor do we expect ever will. It is a thing so done that there is no need for doing it again.

This, then, was the great service of Turgot to the philosophy of history, that he definitively showed history to be no mere aggregate of names, dates, and deeds brought together and determined either accidentally or externally, but an organic whole with an internal plan realised by internal forces. He so apprehended and proved this truth that it may fairly be called, so far at least as French authors are concerned, his conquest, his contribution to historical science. The mere conception was in his time no longer novel; but it had with him a profundity, a comprehensiveness, and a consistency quite novel. His view of social progress we say was profound. It was a deep glance into its nature as a process of self-development; as a process the successive phases of which were what they were, because man was so and so made and situated. He not merely saw the fact of progress, nor that physical and political causes greatly affected it, nor that like every other process it might be referred to the will of the great First Cause, all which had been already seen; but he saw likewise how it was connected with the essential faculties of man, and the constitutive principles of society. No one before him had perceived with anything like the same clearness how the mental or spiritual movement in history underlies, pervades, and originates the outwardly visible movement. In this respect the first half particularly of the "Ébauche du Second Discours" is very remarkable. As regards comprehensiveness, Turgot's view embraced all the elements of social life. Science, art, government, manners, morality, religion, were all held by him to be the subjects of historical progress, and consequently of historical philosophy. At the same time, he was quite aware that none of these things progress isolatedly; but that, on the contrary, the position of any one of them at any given time is closely related to that of all the others, and that there is a perpetual reciprocity of influence between all the forces in the social organism, a constant action and reaction of social facts on one another. The entire "Plan du Premier Discours" shows that he grasped as firmly and completely the truth of the

consensus as of the sequence of social changes, and many of its paragraphs—as, *e.g.*, those descriptive of the hunting and pastoral states—are excellent delineations of what constitutes such a consensus. But his view is not more distinguished for comprehensiveness than for consistency. This can be in no way better brought out than by comparing it with that of Condorcet, to whom so much of the honour properly due to Turgot has been often awarded. Condorcet certainly believed in progress and perfectibility as firmly as and more enthusiastically than Turgot, but his inferiority as regards consistency is immense. Indeed his retrospect of the history of the race, and the prospects he deduces from it, are in manifest contradiction; for, while extolling the vast superiority of his own age over all those which had preceded it, and picturing a glorious future as at hand, he yet, under the influence of his philosophical and religious prejudices, sees only the evil side of the greatest ancient and medieval institutions, the Church, feudalism, and monarchy, for instance; and by attributing to them essentially obstructive and pernicious influences, renders the progress which he glorifies unintelligible, or, as Comte says, a perpetual miracle, an effect without a cause. No such charge can be brought against Turgot. With him, whatever superiority is ascribed to the present is exhibited as the result of a growth which has slowly and intermittingly but surely pervaded the institutions and ages of the past, and which has incorporated into its each succeeding stage what was true and good in the preceding, so as never to be in contradiction to itself.

Among the fragmentary papers of Turgot connected with the philosophy of history, is the sketch of a Political Geography, which shows that he had attained to a broader view of the relationship of human development to the features of the earth, and to physical agencies in general, than even Montesquieu; and yet he saw with perfect clearness not only that many of Montesquieu's inductions were premature and inadequate, but that there was a defect in the method by which he arrived at them; and hence he lays down as a principle to be followed in this order of researches, that physical causes being indirect and secondary, or, in other words, causes which act in and through

mental qualities, natural or acquired, ought not to be had recourse to until mental causes have been fully taken into account. The excellent criticism of Comte, in the fourth volume of the 'Philosophie Positive,' and the fourth of the 'Politique Positive,' on this portion of Montesquieu's speculations, is only a more elaborate reproduction of Turgot's, and is expressed in terms which show that it was directly suggested by that of Turgot.

There is among the many pregnant thoughts of Turgot one which was destined to have so singularly famous a history that it is necessary to state it in his own words. He says: "Before knowing the connection of physical facts with one another, nothing was more natural than to suppose that they were produced by beings, intelligent, invisible, and like to ourselves. Everything which happened without man's own intervention had its god, to which fear or hope caused a worship to be paid conformed to the respect accorded to powerful men,—the gods being only men more or less powerful and perfect in proportion as the age which originated them was more or less enlightened as to what constitutes the true perfections of humanity. But when philosophers perceived the absurdity of these fables, without having attained to a real acquaintance with the history of nature, they fancifully accounted for phenomena by abstract expressions, by essences and faculties, which indeed explained nothing, but were reasoned from as if they were real existences. It was only very late that from observing the mechanical action of bodies on one another, other hypotheses were inferred, which mathematics could develop and experience verify." This is as explicit a statement as can well be imagined of what the world has heard so much about as Comte's law of the three states—viz., that each of our leading conceptions, each branch of our knowledge, passes successively through three different theoretical conditions, the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive; the mind, in the first, regarding phenomena as governed not by invariable laws of sequence, but by single and direct volitions of a superior being or beings; in the second, referring them not to such volitions but to realised abstractions, to occult qualities and essences; while in the final stage it ceases to interpose

either supernatural agents or metaphysical entities between phenomena and their production, but, attending solely to the phenomena themselves, seeks simply to discover their relations of similitude and succession. There cannot be a doubt that as to the general conception of this fundamental principle of his system Comte has been anticipated by Turgot. It is possible that it may have occurred to his mind independently, but it is much more likely that it was suggested by the passage in Turgot. There is a good deal of internal evidence that Comte had not only read but carefully studied what Turgot had written on history. But be this as it may, certain it is that Comte did not originate the general conception of the three states. What he distinctively did was to lay it down as the fundamental law of historical development, to make it the basis of a most elaborate survey of the whole course of that development, and so to apply it to the explanation of a vast number of social facts. Those who believe it to be a true law will probably say that even thus stated the service rendered by Comte must be regarded as incomparably more important than that of Turgot, and that his claim to be a discoverer really remains intact, since he only discovers who proves. Nor against that have I any objection to make. It is necessary to be just to Turgot, but that is not incompatible with justice nor even with generosity to Comte, whose able and laborious endeavour to verify the idea first conceived by Turgot must, by those who are most convinced of its failure, be admitted to have been at least singularly provocative of fruitful inquiry and discussion.

The notion of three successive stages of thought in the interpretation of nature originated, it will be observed, with a man to whom the true interests of religion were sacred, and to whom any irreligious application of it would have been abhorrent; and if Comte has given it, as certainly he has, an irreligious bearing, that is one no less certainly illegitimate than irreligious. Grant Comte's alleged law, Turgot's general conception, and grant to it even a rigid and absolute truthfulness to which it has probably no just pretensions, and even then, if it be confined not only to the five sciences which are all that Comte admits to be sciences, but allowed

to hold true of all the psychological sciences as well, it must be perfectly innocuous, if it can be shown, as we believe can be conclusively done, that metaphysics and theology are not co-ordinate, are not at all on a level with these positive or inductive sciences. It is not Comte's alleged law that is dangerous, but the dogmatic, arbitrary, unreasoned assertion which he has appended to it that five positive sciences comprehend all knowledge. Theology and metaphysics are not merely particular and passing stages of the positive sciences, whether these be physical or psychological sciences, but themselves sciences, each with an appropriate sphere of its own, the one underlying, and the other overlying, the positive sciences. To emancipate physical and psychological science from a theological and metaphysical condition is no less a service to theology and metaphysics than to physics and psychology. Every science must gain by being kept in its own place. It is wrong to mix up either theological beliefs or metaphysical principles among the laws of the positive sciences. But we by no means do so when we hold that both physics and psychology presuppose metaphysics, and yield conclusions of which theology may avail itself, and that we can still look on the whole earth as made beautiful by the artist hand of the Creator, on science as the unveiling of His wisdom, and on history as the manifestation of His providence.

CHAPTER V.

VOLTAIRE.[1]

THERE were in both Montesquieu and Turgot a comprehensiveness of judgment, a candour of disposition, and a calmness of temperament, which elevated them above the position of representatives of the age in which they lived; and it was in one who, although richly endowed with mental gifts, had certainly no more than his share of these qualities—in François-Marie-Arouet, so celebrated under the name of Voltaire—that all its distinctive characteristics and tendencies found their completest embodiment and clearest expression. With as much truth as Louis XIV. had said, "L'État, c'est moi," might Voltaire have said, "Le Siècle, c'est moi." The estimate formed of Voltaire will accordingly always correspond to that formed of the eighteenth century itself. The extravagantly unjust way in which he was generally spoken of during the first thirty years of the present century was chiefly due to a fanatical hatred of all the ideas which led to the French Revolution, and has been disappearing since in proportion to the prevalence of a more correct appreciation of them. He is still under-estimated by those who believe these ideas to have been mere negations, of use only at the most for the destruction of evil. On the other hand, he is now

[1] The literature relative to Voltaire is enormous. He has been written about from all possible points of view. Bungener's 'Voltaire et son Temps,' Janin's 'Le Roi Voltaire,' and Pierson's 'Voltaire et ses Maîtres,' will be found highly interesting reading. It is worth while to compare the curiously different views of Voltaire given by M. Jules Michelet and M. Louis Blanc in the first volumes of their histories of the French Revolution. Every one knows Carlyle's essay. Of the two quite recent works by Mr Morley and Dr Strauss, that by the Englishman is greatly superior to that by the German. There is a special work on 'La Philosophie de Voltaire' by E. Bersot. His historical philosophy has been treated of by Buckle and Laurent.

over-estimated, as he was in his own day, by those who, like Buckle and Laurent, do not perceive that although the truths for which he contended were positive principles of belief and morality, which overthrew the old order of things only because they deserved to do so, which have survived the Revolution, entered deeply and permanently into the spirits of all the leading European nations, and belong not to a dead past but the living present,—yet they were also principles which required to be supplemented by, and subordinated to, others, and which constituted by themselves an essentially and extremely one-sided standard of judgment and conduct.

It is chiefly through his 'Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations,' published in 1756, that Voltaire occupies the important place he does in the philosophy of history. That great work culminated and crowned his career as an historian. His 'Charles XII.' and 'Siècle de Louis XIV.' were stages which led up to it; the former a brilliant instance of descriptive history, and the latter a remarkable attempt to describe the character and course of an entire age; while the 'Essai' had for object to trace the growth of national manners, the progress of society, the development of the human mind from Charlemagne to Louis XIII. The merits of its general conception or organising thought are amply sufficient to atone for not a few failures in execution, and that thought being to a considerable extent original as well as true, its merits must in justice be ascribed to Voltaire himself. Bossuet had preceded him in looking on the succession of events and ages as rationally connected, but he sought the principle of connection in the purposes of the Divine Will, and so passed at once from the domain of history into that of theology; while Voltaire, on the contrary, concentrates his attention on man, not on Providence—on the secondary, not the primary cause—striving to find the explanations of events in the opinions and feelings of men themselves, in the forces discoverable by analysis and induction, without rising above, or in any way going beyond, history proper. So far from being essentially contradictory, these two aspects of history are mutually complemental,—both being true in themselves, and false only when exaggerated into antagonism of each other; still they are different, and that on

which Voltaire insists is undoubtedly that to which the science of history must confine itself in the rigid and exclusive exercise of its peculiar and distinctive function. The design of Voltaire is no less distinct from that of Montesquieu either in the 'Grandeur et Décadence des Romains' or in the 'Esprit des Lois;' for in the former of these works Montesquieu seeks merely to establish, if we may so speak, two definite historical theses, or at least to solve two definite historical problems by exhibiting first the causes which accounted for the marvellous success of Rome, and then those which undermined and destroyed her strength and life; and in the latter he examines merely a particular class of historical phenomena—viz., the various kinds of laws—in all lights, with a view to compass if possible a complete explanation of them; and both of these aims are essentially different from the task which Voltaire proposed to himself, that of writing the history of the human mind and of human society during almost nine centuries. As little is it to be identified with the conceptions of a universal history of humanity which Bodin and still more Turgot endeavoured to set forth and vindicate. Between their labours and Voltaire's the distinction is the important one between proof and realisation, between discourse on history and history, between the abstract and the concrete.

In the working out of his design Voltaire must, I think, be admitted to have rendered most important services both to the art and science of history. The greatest undoubtedly was that he applied his judgment freely and independently to an order of facts which had previously been left almost untouched by critical thought; that, devoid of learned credulity, and unawed by traditional authority, he dared to demand of all that passed for historical both what evidence there was that it had ever taken place, and what was the worth of it supposing it had; and that he was not deterred by the mere circumstance of its having been accepted by an unbroken succession of historians from expressing his conviction that it had never occurred, or that although it had occurred it was not worth recording in the history of a nation, and still less in the history of humanity. He brought such light as there was in the so-called Aufklärung,

the self-styled Age of Reason, directly to bear on the past; and although that was neither a full nor a pure light, it sufficed to break through, and in great measure to dispel, the brooding and chaotic night of credulity, dogmatism, and absurdity in which history was shrouded. In saying so, I am not to be understood as maintaining that Voltaire was the first to subject the materials of history to a free criticism, or as either forgetting or depreciating Vico, Perizonius, Bayle, Beaufort, Fréret, Boulanger, and others; but simply as believing that, owing to something either in the matter or form of their researches, their influence in diffusing a critical spirit into the study of general history was small in comparison with that of *le roi* Voltaire. Nor am I unaware that his criticism was often not supported by what the best historians of the present day would consider an adequate scholarship. The standard of requirement has in that respect greatly risen since he wrote. But it has risen through the spread of the spirit which he did so much to introduce into historical research; and every candid and competent student of his writings will admit that, as to the whole period of time embraced in his 'Essai,' and indeed as to all periods which could be studied without a knowledge of Greek and the oriental languages, his learning was for the age not only great, but rested to an exceptional extent on original authorities, and not on second-hand statements. Notwithstanding all that had been done by his predecessors, it was left to Voltaire to apply the critical spirit to history on a scale and in a form universally interesting, to diffuse it through the popular mind, to discredit effectually and finally the blind credulity with which historical writers had been accustomed to receive whatever had been recorded; and this, the necessary preparation of all the deeper and more enlarged views of the historian's work and duties which now prevail, he accomplished partly by his unrivalled wit and worldly wisdom, and partly by independent research, by really going back to the primary witnesses, and freely testing the special and general reasons for the acceptance or rejection of their evidence.

The historian has to decide on the worth and significance of facts, no less than on the evidence for the reality and circum-

stances of their occurrence; and Voltaire showed his independence of judgment in the former no less than in the latter respect. He did more than any one else to rescue history from the purblind pedants who confounded it with an unreflective and chaotic compilation of facts; and more than any one else to show that it had better work than to dwell in courts and camps and describe only intrigues and battles. Perfect in the use both of ridicule and argument, he jeered and reasoned the dull story-telling race as nearly out of existence as indulgent nature would permit. He insisted on the duty of the judicious choice of facts, and exemplified the advantages of attention to it; he showed both by precept and practice that the aim of the historian's labours was to trace the growth of national life and character, and that the end should determine the relative importance assigned to events; and he succeeded in impressing the lesson on the European mind better than any other man could have done. The value of this service should not be denied or depreciated because his judgment was not always just—because he did not always estimate the importance and bearing of events without bias. The independence of his judgment was a merit even where unaccompanied by the still higher merit of truth.

It is right, however, after having insisted on his chief excellence, to indicate as distinctly leading defects. And certainly one of these was injustice to causes which he disliked, and especially to the noblest of all causes, Christianity. He was naturally prone to be bitter, unmeasured, and unscrupulous in his enmities, and actually was all these in his enmity to positive religion. His fanatical hatred of it had, as it could not but have, the most disastrous effect on his character even as an historian, which is the only aspect in which I wish to regard him. It was of itself amply sufficient to prevent him from attaining to any correct understanding or truly philosophic view of the deeper spirit of history, and particularly of medieval history. While Bossuet sought to make the Christian Church the centre of all history and the source of all that is in it of good, Voltaire endeavoured to turn all history into a polemic against it, and represented it as the chief source of the evils of the ages through which it had passed; a much falser position still, and one far

more incompatible with a sound comprehension of the nature and course of the historical movement. And yet, perhaps, one view exaggerated into injustice may have helped to correct another similarly exaggerated, and to bring out the entire truth; for whereas Bossuet's ecclesiasticism led him to pass over without mention nations like India and China, as if they had no appropriate place in the world-plan, Voltaire, from very opposition to the Christian faith, was induced the more carefully to show that the great heathen nations of Asia had attained to no inconsiderable height of speculative and moral knowledge; and thus unwittingly and even unwillingly may have become a better witness for God than the great bishop of Meaux, by contributing to establish (what the other virtually denied) this sacred and comfortable doctrine, that the Eternal Father has never abandoned any of His children, but even in their darkest and most dismal estate has been near them with the light of His truth and the gifts of His grace.

But Voltaire himself certainly did not attain to such a comprehensive and profound view of history as to recognise clearly a divine will beneath human wills, a first cause working through secondary causes. On the contrary, blindness as to this, non-recognition of a plan in human affairs, makes itself felt as an enormous defect in his whole treatment of the subject, giving to it a character of meanness which cannot well be described, and leaving, notwithstanding his abundant and inimitable wit, a sad and disheartening impression. The defect is to some extent an inconsistency; for among the few principles to which he clung with anything like steadiness, was belief in an almighty and righteous God, and why he should have practically denied that history presents any evidence of His power and justice is not at first apparent. But reflection suffices to show that it was a natural result of the unworthy conception he had formed of Christianity, and of his consequent want of sympathy with the spiritual life of the past, and even hostility to the past as a whole. He could paint vividly and truly certain aspects of the middle ages; but he could not possibly, with his own spirit what it was, understand their real spirit. His quick, versatile, widely-read, and susceptible mind, caught many glimpses of

historical truth, but could not attain to a philosophical comprehension, a secure and thorough possession of it. His anti-religious prejudices, his sectarianism, blinding him to the power and operation of the higher forces of history, he had to seek the explanation of events in its lower forces. Hence inability to trace the outlines of a general plan in history; hence the representation of human nature as a far meaner thing than it is; hence the ascription to little causes, accidental circumstances, of a far greater power over human nature than they exert. Superstitions, irrational habits, mere brute force, are exhibited as the great ministers of destiny, the chief moving forces of history; which thus appears as a badly composed drama, half tragedy and half farce—a burlesque of a sacred subject, partly hateful and partly ridiculous.[1]

There is, in fact, in Voltaire's 'Essai' a decided want of philosophy. Keen, clear, boundlessly clever as it shows its author to have been, there is little trace in it of the caution and comprehensiveness of judgment, the patient and methodical verification of opinions, the catholicity of feeling, and control over temper, which all philosophy demands, and the philosophy of history more perhaps than any other kind of philosophy. He got much deeper into his subject than the historical compilers against whom he waged war; but he never got near the heart of it, never attained a rational comprehension of it. He recognised that his business as an historian of the growth of national mind

[1] Says Carlyle—"Let him (Voltaire) but cast his eye over any subject, in a moment he sees, though indeed only to a short depth, yet with instinctive decision, where the main bearings of it for that short depth lie; what is, or appears to be, its logical coherence; how causes connect themselves with effects; how the whole is to be seized, and in lucid sequence represented to his own or to other minds; but below the short depth alluded to, his view does not properly grow dim, but altogether terminates: thus there is nothing farther to occasion him misgivings; has he not already sounded into that basis of boundless darkness on which all things firmly rest? What lies below is delusion, imagination, some form of superstition or folly, which he, nothing doubting, altogether casts away." And again: "'The Divine Idea, that which lies at the bottom of Appearance,' was never more invisible to any man. History is for him not a mighty drama enacted on the theatre of Infinitude, with Suns for lamps, and Eternity as a background; whose author is God, and whose purport and thousandfold moral lead us up to the 'dark with excess of light' of the Throne of God; but a poor wearisome debating-club dispute, spun through ten centuries, between the Encyclopédie and the Sorbonne."

and life in Europe was to trace the stages through which Western society had passed from barbarism to civilisation, and he made a praiseworthy effort to write history accordingly, giving attention not so much to kings, courts, battles, and intrigues, as to opinions, customs, government, finances, the sciences and arts. But his conception of civilisation was miserably mean and narrow, excluding all earnest practical religious faith, and including nothing higher than intellectual cleverness and polished manners; he had no insight into the internal plan of which history is the gradual unfolding—into what, with Carlyle and Fichte, we may call "the Divine Idea which lies at the bottom of Appearance." That he could have prefixed to his work the essay which he did, and given it the title of 'La Philosophie de l'Histoire,' was a most striking evidence of how far he was from any worthy conception of what had a claim to the designation. What he called "the philosophy of history" was a succession of loosely connected remarks, some of which are unjust and indecent, and none of which have the slightest value, on a variety of historical and semi-historical subjects which have little or no other connection than that they afforded Voltaire the opportunity of displaying his enmity to the Bible.

Perhaps, however, a more philosophical conception of history will be sought in vain in any of his contemporaries, Montesquieu and especially Turgot excepted. Duclos was clever and more guarded, but exceedingly superficial. Fréret was a great scholar and critic, but applied his erudition and acuteness chiefly to the elucidation of particular points. The Abbé de Mably had learning and superior talents, but he was the panegyrist of a theatrical antiquity, which never existed elsewhere than in a few excited imaginations, and the assailant of modern civilisation even in its best qualities. Boulanger referred the origin of religion and despotism and the general direction taken by history to the influence of deluges and other physical catastrophes on the minds of primitive men. Philosophical history as composed by Raynal, was an exercise in declamation, or a course of raving about liberty and justice, tyrants and priests. Rousseau, who exerted an influence in some respects greater than Voltaire himself, had the meanest and falsest views of history a

man could entertain. He began his literary career by attempting to prove that the arts and sciences had produced depravity of morals and manners; and he followed up that attack by another on civilisation in general as the cause of human misery and corruption. He regarded history not as a progressive movement, but as a process of deterioration; the savage state as the primitive and perfect state. Man, according to him, was good, free, and happy by nature; it was society and its rules which spoiled him. "Vous donnez envie de marcher à quatre pattes," said Voltaire to him. He is entitled to a large place in literary history, and even in the history of religion, jurisprudence, and education—but to none here.[1]

[1] The views of Rousseau on the origin of society, social contract, natural rights, &c., are better expounded in Bluntschli's 'Geschichte des Staatsrechts' than anywhere else I have seen. Emil Feuerlein has three most careful and conscientious articles on his religious, political, social, and educational opinions, in the first and second volumes of the 'Gedanke'—Rousseau'sche Studien. The most adequate monograph on Rousseau is the latest—the two-volumed work of Mr J. Morley.

CHAPTER VI.

CONDORCET.[1]

THE next work to be noticed is the 'Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain,' written by Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, in 1793, four years after the Revolution, and thirty-seven years after the publication of the 'Essai' of Voltaire. In these thirty-seven years the ideas which Voltaire and the philosophers associated with him so actively disseminated had taken firm root far and wide, and sprung up with marvellous rapidity and force. Society was everywhere found ready for their reception, and soon the new principles were stronger than the old and struggling with them for the mastery. That they had gained it, the Revolution declared in the most decisive and startling manner. With that event, the ideas which had produced it and were set completely free by it burst forth in exaggerated forms, in new and strange developments, in many fantastic and even hideous applications. The minds of men were excited in the highest degree. They were tossed between the extremes of love and hate, hope and despair, as they have never been since, and as they had not been for more than two centuries before. The fountains of emotion in the human heart were laid open to their depths as if by an earthquake. With the sincerest and worthiest partisans of the Revolution, among whom Condorcet must undoubtedly be numbered, love and hope were of course the dominant passions. The splendours of a mirage gave a decep-

[1] On Condorcet as an historical philosopher, see Auguste Comte — Cours de Philosophie Positive, iv. 252-262, and Système de Politique Positive, iv. Appendice Général, 109-111; F. Laurent—Études, xii. 121-126; and Morley's "Condorcet" in 'Critical Miscellanies.' I have restated the most fundamental of Comte's criticisms on p. 128, 129.

tive beauty to the waste howling wilderness before them. Faith in the future of the human race strengthened them to bear even the horrors of the Reign of Terror; faith in a thorough regeneration of the world and a blessed millennium. It was "a time," says Hegel, "in which a spiritual enthusiasm thrilled through the world, as if the reconciliation between the divine and the secular was now first accomplished;" "a time," says Wordsworth,

> "In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
> Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
> The attraction of a country in romance!
> When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
> When most intent on making of herself
> A prime enchantress—to assist the work
> Which then was going forward in her name!"

The book of Condorcet is thoroughly characteristic of the time. Although written when its author lay concealed in the garret of a friend from the emissaries of Robespierre, it is pervaded by a spirit of excessive hopefulness, and pictures a glorious future as at hand. It was with the vision of the guillotine before him and in constant dread of a violent death, that this at least brilliant and generous if somewhat fanciful and vacillating man, sincere in his love and strong in his faith towards humanity, after all other religion had died out of his soul, comforted himself by trying to demonstrate that the evils of life had arisen from a conspiracy of priests and rulers against their fellows, and from the bad laws and bad institutions which they had succeeded in creating; but that the human race would finally conquer its enemies, and so completely free itself of its evils that even disease and suffering should cease, and truth, liberty, equality, justice, and love should universally abound. His work is thus a sort of hymn in celebration of the dignity of man and in salutation of the advent of a reign of righteousness and peace, which cannot fail to interest and move, were it only from the fact that it was composed almost under the axe of the executioner.

The circumstances in which it was written were thus the most unfavourable that can well be imagined to minute accuracy of execution, and must in the eyes of a candid critic go far to excuse its numerous errors of detail. It would be ungenerous to

insist on these, and for our purpose, or almost any good purpose, useless, as the only value which can reasonably be attributed to the book lies in its general ideas. It must be considered, as its author wished it to be considered, as a mere programme of principles, a sketch to be filled up in a subsequent and elaborate work could the guillotine be escaped, which, alas! was not possible, except by suicide in prison.

The fundamental idea of Condorcet is that of a human perfectibility which has manifested itself in continuous progress in the past, and must lead to indefinite progress in the future. Man, he endeavours to show, has advanced uninterruptedly at a more or less rapid rate, from the moment of his appearance on earth to the present time, in the path of enlightenment, virtue, and happiness, and will continue to advance so long as the world lasts. As the whole intellectual and moral life of the individual is developed out of a susceptibility to sensations, and the power of retaining, discriminating, and combining them, so all the varieties of civilisation, all the phases of history, are but the collective work of the individuals thus humbly endowed. Their starting-point is the lowest stage of barbarism; the first men possessing no superiority over the other animals which does not result directly from superiority of bodily organisation. Like all consistent materialists, Condorcet adopts what has been called "the savage theory" of the origin of man, but his sense of self-consistency seems alone to have determined his choice. He accepts it as a legitimate corollary from what he regards as the true philosophy of human nature; but adduces in its favour none of those special facts and reasons, none of those inductive considerations, on which a Lubbock, Tylor, Haeckel, and so many other scientific men of the present day, properly lay almost exclusive stress.

The stages which the human race has already gone through, or, in other words, the great epochs of history, are regarded as nine in number; of which the first three can confessedly be described only conjecturally from general observations as to the development of the human faculties and the analogies of savage life. In the first epoch, men are united into hordes of hunters and fishers, who acknowledge in some degree public authority

and the claims of family relationship, and who make use of an articulate language, "invented by some men of genius, the eternal benefactors of the human race, but whose names and countries are for ever buried in oblivion;" in the second epoch, the pastoral state, property is introduced, and along with it inequality of conditions, and even slavery, but also leisure to cultivate intelligence, to invent some of the simpler arts, and to acquire some of the more elementary truths of science; and in the third epoch, the agricultural state, as leisure and wealth are greater, labour better distributed and applied, and the means of communication increased and extended, progress is still more rapid. With the invention of alphabetic writing the conjectural part of history closes, and the more or less authenticated part commences. By an omission still greater than Bossuet's, China, India, "the five great monarchies," Judea, and, in fact, all nations, all histories comprehended in the oriental world, are passed unappreciated and even unnoticed; and the fourth and fifth epochs are represented as corresponding to Greece and Rome. The middle ages are divided into two epochs, the former of which terminates with the Crusades, and the latter with the invention of printing. The eighth epoch extends from the invention of printing to the revolution in the method of philosophic thinking accomplished by Descartes. And the ninth epoch begins with that great intellectual revolution and ends with the great political and moral revolution of 1789, and is illustrious through the discovery of the true system of the physical universe by Newton, of human nature by Locke and Condillac, and of society by Turgot, Price, and Rousseau.

Now, nothing can be more important in any attempt at a philosophical delineation of the course of history than the division into periods. That ought of itself to exhibit the plan of the development, the line and distance already traversed, and the direction of future movement. It should be made on a single principle, so that the series of periods may be homogeneous, but on a principle so fundamental and comprehensive as to pervade the history not only as a whole but in each of its elements, and to be able to furnish guidance to the historian of any special development of human knowledge and life. The discovery and

proof of such a principle is one of the chief services which the philosophy of history may be legitimately expected to render to the historians of science, of religion, of morality, and of art. And if it fail to render this service, that can only be because it has failed to accomplish its own distinctive and proper work—failed to grasp and follow the thread that guides through the labyrinth of history, and allows the mind to trace in some measure its plan, and to conjecture with some degree of probability its purpose. But failure is very possible, success very difficult. No superficial glance can possibly detect, nor happy accident disclose, the true principle of historical division, any more than of botanical or zoological classification. It does not lie on the surface, but in the essential nature of the thing, and implies a thorough acquaintance therewith, a profound insight into the course and tendencies of history, attainable only through prolonged and patient study, and after repeated failures. Condorcet had not the requisite knowledge of the subject; had not gone deep enough in his investigations into historical development, to apprehend the principle by which its stages or periods should be determined; and could only *seem* to determine them by fixing, and even that on inadequate grounds, on certain conspicuous events sufficiently distant from each other to divide the whole of European history into a few ages, and yet not so unequally distant that the inequality should of itself show the non-co-ordinacy of these ages. And not only is there no proof given that the events which are thus selected as the origins of periods, the turning-points of history, are all of the same rank—that is, on a level as to importance or influence; but, as Comte has well remarked, they are not even of the same order, one being industrial, another political, another scientific, another religious. It is unnecessary to carry this criticism into detail, and scarcely necessary to say that it involves no more reproach to Condorcet than the statement that Cæsalpinus failed to classify plants aright involves censure of that worthy old naturalist.

Another defect must be indicated. Condorcet belonged to a generation which was narrow and unjust in its judgment of many great causes, and he did not in that respect rise above the general spirit of his time. He carries into his estimate of

the past not the calm catholic spirit of the philosopher, but the passionate and prejudiced spirit of sectarian fanaticism. He sees no beauty or worth in philosophy except when it attempts to explain the world on mechanical and sensational principles, and in religion none at all. Idealism and Christianity appear to him as simply delusions; Monarchy and the Church as two essentially pernicious institutions, the one of which has persistently tyrannised over men by brute force, and the other constantly betrayed them with lies. These views are of course both uncharitable, and inconsistent with the testimony of history. They are inconsistent even with Condorcet's own fundamental notions of progress and perfectibility. Progress, continuous and indefinite improvement, should have reasons. But what reasons for them can there be, if all the most powerful and durable agencies and institutions in history have been essentially obstructive and hurtful? How comes it, if such be the case, that retrogression is not the characteristic of history instead of progress? It might have been possible for Condorcet, had his philosophy been other than it was, to have evaded if not avoided this difficulty by ascribing progress to a power inherent in human nature, and capable of not only dispensing with any external aid, but of triumphing over every external opposition—to an innate spontaneous and irresistible faculty; but his sensationalism and denial of *a priori* principles and original tendencies precluded his having recourse to this explanation, and left him no escape from self-contradiction. History itself is less illogical; never contradicts itself; never presents anything good or bad for which there is not a sufficient cause. If there has been anywhere improvement in the world, it has been because there the forces of good have been on the whole mightier than those of evil; and if anywhere deterioration, it has been because there the superior strength has been on the side of evil. The truth as taught by history is against Condorcet. But scarcely less is it against those, so numerous now, who refuse to apply a moral standard in the appreciation of the systems and personages of the past; who will condemn nothing which is very old and which has been widely influential; who exonerate despotism and priestcraft on the plea that kings and priests have only

been what society made them; and who, in a word, take fact and prescription for justice and principle. The man who does not know that a lie may live for centuries; that evil is strong and fruitful no less than good, and has its day no less than good; that the influence of a bad institution or a bad man may extend over many nations and affect many generations; and that kings and priests, have sometimes consciously and often unconsciously, been the worst earthly enemies of their fellow-men,—is either very obtuse in his moral perceptions, or greatly perverted by sophistry, or exceedingly ignorant. Between the false liberalism in fashion at present and the narrow fanaticism which was in fashion when Condorcet wrote, there is but little to choose. Both have taken the name of philosophy, but she disowns both.

The most original, and, notwithstanding its errors, the most important part of Condorcet's treatise, is that which has been most censured and ridiculed, the last chapter, which has for subject the future of the human race. There the idea that generalisations from the past must supply data for prevision of the future in historical as well as in physical science, is for the first time perhaps adequately insisted on. "If man," it is said, "can predict with almost entire confidence phenomena when he knows their laws, if even when these laws are unknown he can from experience of the past foresee with great probability the events of the future, why should it be deemed chimerical to attempt to picture the probable destiny of the human race in accordance with the results of its history? Since opinions formed on the experience of the past are the rules of conduct adopted by the wiser portion of mankind, why should the philosopher be forbidden to rest his conjectures on the same basis, regulating his convictions by the number and exactness of his observations? The sole foundation of belief in the natural sciences is the idea that the general laws, known or ignored, which regulate the phenomena of the universe, are necessary and constant, and for what reason should this hold less true of the intellectual and moral faculties of man than of the other operations of nature?" It is owing to his having at once distinctly enunciated this idea and sought to realise it that both

Saint-Simon and Comte have assigned to his work a place among the most important productions of the scientific mind, while showing themselves thoroughly aware of its many serious defects. The truth of the idea is not dependent on any exaggerated view of progress as the continuous, ubiquitous, inevitable manifestation of an inherent faculty or force, but on the simple fact of progress in directions which can be traced; nor is it affected by mistakes which he may have made in his delineation of the future. And without any wish to excuse or explain away his mistakes of the latter kind, I believe they have not only been more than sufficiently dwelt on, but greatly exaggerated. It is erroneous to represent him as assuming the *rôle* of prophet farther than that a certain sort of prevision seemed to him essentially involved in historical science,—farther than that general laws regulative of the past seemed to him to warrant general inferences respecting the future. He confined himself, however, entirely to general inferences, and never pretended to predict particular events. He confined himself, indeed, to infer from the entire history of the past three tendencies as likely to be characteristic features of the future, and to believe with measure in any of them appears to involve nothing obviously absurd and utopian.

These three features of the future, or tendencies of the present, or directions of progress, are: 1, The destruction of inequality between nations; 2, the destruction of inequality between classes; and 3, the improvement of individuals. Now, as to the first, the destruction of inequality between nations, Condorcet does not thereby mean that nations tend to become, or ever will become, in all respects alike, which would really amount to holding that nations, as nations, must cease to exist. Nationality is inconsistent with absolute equality. But only inexcusable carelessness can explain any one's supposing him to believe in such equality. That which he speaks of is equality of liberty or right, the ordinary signification of the term among his contemporaries, and that which is found in the legislation of the period—*e.g.*, in the Codes of 1791 and 1793. Hence when he says nations tend to equality he means simply, as he himself tells us, that they all tend to freedom; that

liberty is what they are alike entitled to, and will alike enjoy; that nature has not doomed the inhabitants of any country to slavery either of body or mind, but made them for independence and the exercise of reason. The differences or distinctions which flow from the very use of reason and freedom do not seem to him incompatible with equality, but only those which cannot be traced to the true—*i.e.*, free moral personality as their ground,—only those which, on the contrary, attack and seek to subvert that, by denial of the right of all nations without distinction to rational freedom. Nations, he thinks, are equal if equally free, and are all tending to equality because all tending to freedom.

Thus understood, the disappearance of inequality between nations implies the disappearance of inequality between the different classes of citizens in a nation. It presupposes that the right to freedom does not divide but unite men, belonging of its very nature to all; that

> "Our life is turned
> Out of her course, wherever man is made
> An offering or a sacrifice, a tool
> Or implement, a passive thing employed
> As a brute mean, without acknowledgment
> Of common right or interest in the end;
> Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt."

The inequality between the different classes in a nation comprises inequality of wealth and instruction, and, according to Condorcet, the tendency of historical progress is towards equality as regards both. In saying this of wealth, he does not mean that the time is coming when no man will be richer than another, but simply that the numerous distinctions between men according to their wealth which have been originated by the civil laws, and perpetuated by factitious means, are destined to be swept away; and that their abolition, leaving property, trade, and industry entirely free, must help to destroy all fixed class distinctions—moneyed inclusive—all casteship, in society. He may have been mistaken. Many think that the experience of our own country since it entered on the path which Condorcet recommended to the world, goes to show that wealth left to itself tends not to equality but to inequality; and the most

democratic of nations, the United States, far from manifesting, as might have been looked for, an equal or higher faith in freedom of trade, shows a singular aversion to it. Under the English *régime* of liberty, the rich are always, it is said, growing richer, and the poor poorer, and so the distance between rich and poor is continually widening instead of lessening. But does the little wealth of the poor tend when free to decrease in the same mode and sense that the much wealth of the rich tends to increase? Or must not, on the contrary, when free, the tendency alike of small and of large sums be to increase; and if the little of the poor be actually seen to become less, must it not be owing to some disturbing cause, such as population outgrowing capital, and neither to freedom nor the increase of the riches of the rich in a state of freedom, both of which of themselves only tend to diminish the poverty of the poor? And granting that the difference of fortune between the wealthiest and the poorest member of the community is greater at present than ever it was, are not the number of intermediate fortunes, their gradation, and the way in which they pass from one person to another, sufficient notwithstanding to establish the existence of that tendency to equality, even as regards wealth, for which Condorcet contended? Further, have we not simply to look around us and mark how rapidly landed property, although its sale is still so far from free, is passing out of noble into trading and mercantile hands, and how vainly the new proprietors must strive to gain the social position of their predecessors, in order to convince ourselves that free trade is a most democratic thing, surely and steadily pulling the higher classes of society down to a lower level? It may very well be thought, then, that in this respect society is tending in the direction indicated by Condorcet; but even if not, his opinion is simply erroneous, and neither absurd nor utopian; a proposition for discussion, not for ridicule.

So when he speaks of a tendency in history to equality of instruction, equality must again be understood as an attribute of liberty, and as meaningless or mischievous when detached from it and regarded as a separate or co-ordinate principle. He in the plainest terms rejects the notion that no man is to receive more learning than another, but all are to be taught the same things

and to the same extent. "The equality of instruction," he says, "which should be aimed at, is certainly not that which would give all men the same amount of knowledge. The only equality to be desired is that which would destroy all slavish dependence. By a choice of the appropriate kinds of knowledge and of the means best adapted to communicate them, the entire mass of a people may be instructed in all that each individual needs to know in order to secure the free development of his industry and faculties. Equality of instruction carried thus far, the inequality of the natural faculties of each would benefit all." One hopes there is nothing utopian in that. One feels even as if the Aufklärung and the Revolution had really made out some claim to existence when they established what antiquity and feudalism, monarchy and the Church, had so shamefully denied—this right of man as man to so much education as will enable him to live as a man, as a rational and free being, and not as a brute creature which is driven and ruled from without for the pleasure and interest of a master.

The third and most famous inference of our author is the indefinite perfectibility of human nature itself, intellectually, morally, and physically. He uses even the term infinite, and Cousin and other critics have taken him rigidly at his word, but very unfairly, as he clearly shows his meaning merely to be that no fixed term or limit is assignable to progress. He has nowhere denied that progress is conditioned both by the constitution of humanity and the character of its surroundings, but he affirms that these conditions are compatible with endless progress; and, in fact, only a being not absolute and infinite, but conditioned and finite, is capable of progress of any kind. An absolutely infinite progress, implying the progress of an absolutely infinite being, is a contradiction in terms; but Condorcet was quite right in thinking that the human mind can assign no fixed limits to its own advancement in knowledge, and that science both as to wealth of results and improvement of methods may grow more and more for ever, constantly finding its horizon recede, constantly attaining a wider and clearer range of vision. The very attempt, indeed, of reason to assign limits to its own progress, is the same sort of absurdity as would be a man's at-

tempting to leap out of or into his own body. It is not necessary, however, here to have recourse to the metaphysical reasoning which establishes this fundamental truth of metaphysical science; it is enough merely to ask those who deny it to state where they suppose knowledge is necessitated to stop. Thus far, then, Condorcet was on firm ground. But he went farther; he supposed that intellectual acquisitions do not entirely pass away with the individuals or generations which have made them, but are to some extent transmitted or inherited; and that in consequence there is in the course of ages a gradual increase not only of the intellectual wealth, but of the intellectual ability of men. It may be so. The opinion is not absurd, not indefensible. There are laws of transmission which rule in the mind as well as in the body, and which are as yet very inadequately understood, although—thanks to Lucas, Darwin, Galton, &c.—the scientific world is now aware of their importance. One of the boldest and ablest thinkers of the present day, Mr Herbert Spencer, seeks to base the entire science of mind on the principle that the faculties and intuitions possessed by any living individuals have arisen from organised and consolidated expèriences of all antecedent individuals who bequeathed to them their slowly-developed nervous organisations. Mr Spencer, in fact, holds as an elaborated theory what Condorcet only vaguely anticipated; and hence, since fairness requires us to criticise opinions in their completest form, we need merely say regarding that of Condorcet that it seems to have been in his mind a mere conjecture, which may have been suggested by the development hypotheses of Maillet, Buffon, and Lamarck. He gives no reasons for it, and makes no attempt to show that any of the numerous facts which at least appear to contradict it in reality do not. This, however, does not affect his main position. The doctrine of the indefinite perfectibility of knowledge is quite distinct from, and rests on quite other grounds than, the doctrine of the indefinite perfectibility of the intellectual constitution. Philosophy, science, poetry, and politics may have made constant progress from the origin of history to the present day; and yet the philosophic genius of Plato, the scientific genius of

Aristotle, the poetical genius of Homer, and the political genius of Pericles, may never have been surpassed or even equalled.

Condorcet believed as firmly in the indefinite progress of morality as of knowledge. He thought the knowledge of moral truth could not retrograde or remain stationary if the knowledge of all other truth advanced, and that, as in other things so in morals, practice would conform in some degree to knowledge. There have been those who thought otherwise. The Chinese sage Laotseu held that princes should not permit their people to receive instruction, because those who have knowledge will have desires, and those who have desires will probably make troublesome citizens, and will certainly be attached to phenomenal and contingent existence, enslaved to those earthly and fleeting things from which the great aim of wisdom should be to detach the mind as the condition of its attaining absolute existence in the impersonal Reason. Rousseau came into a world sadly out of joint, into a society wretched, disorderly, and godless; and he saw those who should have been its teachers and guides, the accommodating slaves of its corruption, justifying vice instead of rebuking it, seeking not what was true and good and for the benefit of humanity, but what promised to be best paid in gold, or the favour of the great, or the applause of the multitude; and he turned away in grief and bitterness of spirit from the sight, and tried to console himself with the dream of a state of nature in which men were ignorant and innocent. Mr Buckle, dazzled by the obvious and marvellous triumphs of science, and finding moral progress not measurable by his methods, concluded that intellect alone was the great moving force in history, and that morality was feeble and stationary. But the advocates of this view have never been able to attain a wide assent to it. It has been generally and almost instinctively rejected as a dangerous sophism, and even those who have acted on it have almost always preferred to offer no reasons for their conduct than to offer this. Condorcet only gave expression, therefore, to the common reason and feeling of the race, when he maintained that progress in truth must tend to progress in good; that the destruction of false and the establishment of true beliefs

are indispensable to the improvement of laws, institutions, and manners; that, in a word, the way to virtue passes through the gate of truth. He put, however, a private interpretation on this doctrine, or at least drew from it an illegitimate corollary, when he inferred that the men of later generations are born with better moral dispositions than those of earlier times. True or false, that proposition has no essential connection with the doctrine of moral progression.

The extension of the doctrine of perfectibility to the physical constitution of man is its most doubtful application; and Condorcet at this point certainly falls into extravagances which have given reason to ridicule. It is not true that he thinks the physical constitution may be so perfected that men will live for ever—"l'homme ne deviendra pas immortel;" but he believes that the improvements in medicine, sanitary science, political economy, and the art of government, may not only vastly prolong life, but that no term can be assigned to its prolongation by these means. Now, the proposition that the rate of mortality diminishes with the progress of civilisation had probability in its favour when Condorcet wrote, and has been amply established since; but it is not more true, not better established, than that the physiological limit of life will not recede very far. It is true that we do not know with precision the amount of vital energy stored up in any organism, and that we cannot fix with precision the date of its exhaustion, both because ignorant of its amount and because it may be either wasted or economised; but we at least know that every organism has a sum of vital energy which it cannot increase, and which it diminishes or uses up in every vital act. The death of the body is a term which cannot be precisely fixed, and which can be made slowly to recede; yet which can never in the happiest circumstances be very remote, for it is definitely inherent in the very life of the body, absolutely dependent on a store of vital energy which is continually being spent, and which is by no means vast.

CHAPTER VII.

THE THEOCRATIC SCHOOL.

The Revolution, after passing through various democratic stages of heroism and horror in a short time, during which men were too occupied and excited to be able to reflect with calmness on the course of history, issued in the military despotism of Napoleon, which proved as unfavourable to historical philosophy as democratic change and violence. He was the persistent opponent and oppressor of free thought; he feared and hated speculation; cherished a mean jealousy of every kind of intellectual superiority which he could not enslave; and exerted the immense force which his genius and fortune gave him to turn reason from every path of inquiry which might lead to conclusions unfavourable to his own schemes and interests. He made France, as has been said, one soldier, and himself the god of that soldier, and to confirm and perpetuate the idolatry he strove to extinguish light and crush liberty. He failed, as he deserved to do, and was signally punished for his prostitution of vast powers to a mean end—for his preference of a vulgar and baneful glory to the far grander career to which Providence had invited him. Thought was not to be crushed out even by his iron heel; and when he fell, the profusion with which ideas burst forth showed how ineffective all his efforts at repression had been. He succeeded in partially and temporarily checking the utterance of thought, but probably thereby rather favoured than hindered its formation. During the period of comparative silence which he enforced, men did not cease to reflect and speculate on the strange events which they had witnessed or taken part in, although they had to keep their conclusions to themselves.

Consequently, when the Restoration allowed the thoughts which had been repressed by Buonaparte to manifest themselves, it soon appeared that there had been growing up many and most diverse systems of political opinion, all resting on, or at least involving, general theories of history.

Of these general theories the historical philosophy of what is known as the reactionary party or theocratic school is entitled to be first considered, because it was advocated in defiance of Napoleon during the whole period of his reign, and appeared to triumph in his fall. It was the theory of the government which succeeded him, the government of 1815, so far as that government had a theory, so far as it was free and able to do what it wished. Fortunately it had very little of such freedom or ability, and could only represent its theory most imperfectly. A passionate aversion to the distinctive tenets of the eighteenth century was one of the most marked characteristics of the reactionary or theocratic party. All who can be regarded as good representatives of it, looked on that century as an epoch of shame, closing in an event the most horrible the world had seen. They stood too near the Revolution, and had suffered too much through it, to be able to judge it impartially. The terror, the religious and moral delirium, the confiscations, banishments, and bloodshed, which accompanied it, seemed to them of its very essence, and they believed that they could not condemn it sternly enough, nor assail its principles too strongly, nor oppose its influences too resolutely. To meet, to conquer, to crush the spirit of the Revolution, was the aim which, under a sincere sense of duty, they set before them. They used their pens as soldiers their swords against a hated foe. They were moved by a powerful polemical motive, and had immediately in view a partisan purpose. They were consequently as unlike as could be to calm labourers in the field of science. Hence no scientific exposition of their distinctive historical theory is to be found in any of their writings; hence no member of the French division of the theocratic school has given us an elaborated philosophy of history, or, indeed, any philosophy of history simply for its own sake. Their views of the course and significance of human history must be disengaged, disentangled, from an extensive

literature composed of works belonging chiefly to the departments of theological and political polemics or apologetics.

It must also be remarked that more than a general similarity of spirit and opinion is not to be traced in the works of the representatives of this party. De Maistre, De Bonald, De Lamennais, D'Eckstein, Ballanche, had each his own point and mode of view, and they differed from one another in numerous most important respects. M. Chateaubriand, who is often classed with them, really belonged to no party. In his teeming and comprehensive but vague and undecided mind, all the sentiments and sympathies of his age had a place, while fixed principles had none. Yet, perhaps, his influence was exerted on the whole in the same direction as that of the other authors mentioned. Certainly none of them, nor even all of them combined, did so much to exalt and adorn, so much to recommend to the popular imagination and heart, the theocratic conception of the Christian Church in its relation to society and history. In that respect the 'Génie du Christianisme' is probably the *ne plus ultra* of the human mind. Then, none of them did so much to show how even medieval history, which had previously been treated either with intolerable dulness or flippant contempt, could be vivified by a poetic imagination. The 'Martyrs' (1809) was the opening of a new epoch in historical composition. Greek and Christian life were there beautifully depicted, and the Franks marched to battle fierce and terrible as when they conquered the Gauls and the Romans. It is well known how the vivid descriptions of this work and Sir Walter Scott's 'Ivanhoe' acted on the imagination of young Augustin Thierry, and influenced his choice of a career. They thus directly contributed to give to France the greatest of historical narrators, one of the most illustrious chiefs of the modern historical school.[1] Notwithstanding its general title, the earliest of M. Chateaubriand's works, the 'Essai sur les Revolutions' (1797), has no claim to our consideration. It is interesting and valuable to a student of the personal history of

[1] M. Thierry has admirably recalled his impressions in a celebrated passage of the 'Lettres sur l'Histoire de France.' In a page less known but not less beautiful, M. Edgar Quinet has described how deeply he was affected when a boy of fourteen or fifteen by a reading of the Atala and René. See E. Quinet's Œuvres Complètes, vi. 404.

M. Chateaubriand, from the date and circumstances of its composition, its sceptical and melancholy tone, and even its immature and chaotic character; but a student of the development of historical philosophy can only regard it as an incoherent rhapsody in which instruction will be sought in vain.[1]

It is only with hesitation that I include even M. Ballanche in the same group with the Count de Maistre; one of the most gentle and liberal of men with one of the severest and most intolerant; the vague and amiable poetical mystic, with the sharp, trenchant, polemical dogmatist; a sincere believer in liberty and progress after a fashion, with a sincere hater of liberty and a decided denier of progress. De Maistre, De Bonald, De Lamennais in the earlier part of his career, and D'Eckstein, have more in common, and yet differ widely in various respects. It is therefore by no means easy to evolve the general view of human history which underlies and pervades the works of the adherents of the theocratic school, while it must be obvious from what has already been said that that is what ought to be done. It would not reward us, so far as our present purpose is concerned, to treat of these authors and their works separately. Our task must rather be to look for resemblances than differences, for common than individual features.[2]

The chiefs of the reaction, in proposing to themselves to crush

[1] There is a very appreciative paper on Chateaubriand in Sir Archibald Alison's Essays. The most elaborate estimates of his character and influence are those of Villemain, 'Le Tribune Moderne, M. de Chateaubriand,' 1858; and Sainte-Beuve, 'Chateaubriand et son Groupe Littéraire sous l'Empire,' 1861.

[2] The following are the works from which my exposition of the theocratic theory is drawn: M. de Bonald (1754-1840)—'Théorie du Pouvoir Politique et Religieux dans la Société Civile,' 1796; 'Essai Analytique sur les Lois Naturelles de l'Ordre Social,' 1800; 'La Législation Primitive,' 2d ed., 1821. A collected edition of M. de Bonald's works has been several times printed. M. de Maistre (1754-1821)—'Considérations sur la France,' 1796; 'Du Pape,' 1819; 'De l'Eglise Gallicane,' 1821; 'Les Soirées de Saint Petersbourg,' 1821. There are two excellent essays on De Maistre, one by Prof. v. Sybel in his 'Kleine Schriften,' and another by Mr Morley in his 'Critical Miscellanies.' M. de Lamennais (1782-1854)—'Essai sur l'Indifférence en Matière de la Religion,' 1817-23; 'De la Religion considérée dans ses Rapports avec l'Ordre Politique et Civil,' 1825-26; 'Des Progrès de la Révolution et de la Guerre contre l'Eglise,' 1829. Besides the studies of M. Sainte-Beuve on Lamennais, I may recommend the essay of Prof. Huber of Munich in his 'Kleine Schriften,' and the articles of M. Binaut in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes.' M. d'Eckstein (1785)—'Le Catholique.' This

the Revolution, to root out its principles and undo its effects, were not blind to the magnitude of their task. They hated the Revolution, but they did not despise it; they knew it was no accident, no product of petty causes; they believed it to be the natural and inevitable result of a radically erroneous conception of man's relation to God and to his fellow-men which had been growing and spreading into wrong habits of thought and action from the time of the Renaissance downwards, till at length head, heart, and every member of the body politic were diseased and corrupt. It said much for the political perspicacity of M. de Bonald and of M. de Maistre that in their earliest works—the two books published in 1796—they should have given clear expression to the conviction that the roots of the Revolution went far deeper down and farther back than was generally supposed. They set themselves to resist it with the full consciousness that it was but a startling outward phase of an internal moral and social revolution which began when the modern emerged from the medieval world. They believed that it could only be opposed successfully if opposed in its principles, and they admitted that in undertaking so to oppose it they proposed to effect a far greater revolution than it had itself been, even nothing less than resettling and reorganising society on a foundation from which it had been gliding with ever-increasing velocity for three centuries. They thus deliberately took up a position of antagonism to modern philosophy, and, indeed, to modern history.

What is called sensationalism was the dominant philosophy in France during the eighteenth century, almost the only philosophy in France for a considerable time before the Revolution. All knowledge was believed to be reducible to impressions on the senses; thought to be secreted by the brain; feeling and volition to be results of the corporeal organism. In this philosophy the writers I speak of saw one of the most powerful causes of the Revolution and of the crimes associated with it. Against this

voluminous periodical began to appear in 1826. M. Ballanche (1776)—'Les Institutions Sociales,' 1818; 'La Palingénésie Sociale,' 1823-30. All these authors are ably judged by M. Damiron in his 'Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France, au xix^e^ Siècle.'

philosophy, therefore, they waged an unwearied polemic, charging it with degrading man to the level of the brutes, and with leading inevitably to immorality, anarchy, misrule, and impiety. As, however, they attacked it solely in the interests of the practical life, or, in other words, not as false but as evil, they not only contributed nothing to its philosophical refutation, but assumed and asserted its causal connection with the vices they denounced, even where proof was most incumbent on them.[1] They did not stop with opposition to sensationalism, but went on to attack modern philosophy in its principle and entire development. De Maistre wrote a book to prove Bacon a scientific charlatan, and laid it down as a principle that "contempt for Locke is the beginning of knowledge." A considerable portion of the second volume of the 'Essai' of Lamennais and the whole of its 'Défense' were devoted to show that all philosophy since Descartes was radically vicious,—that its method was identical with that employed by religious heretics,—and that it ended inevitably in scepticism. De Bonald argued that the history of philosophy was nothing else than a history of the variations of philosophical schools, which left no other impression on the reader than an insurmountable disgust at all philosophical researches. Chateaubriand declared the human race had not made a step of progress in the moral sciences, and that it would be easy even to deny the principles of the physical sciences, in which alone there had been any advance. D'Eckstein denied the worth of consciousness as a means of discovering truth, and argued that a knowledge of humanity was only to be attained through a process of historical research based on faith, and resulting in acquaintance with the characters of the only true men, Adam and Christ. And Ballanche supposed the material of all truth to be a sacred tradition which, while varying in form, remained in substance ever the same.

The explanation of this direct and conscious antagonism to modern philosophy is not far to seek, and takes us into the very heart of the theocratic theory. The philosophers of the eigh-

[1] Perhaps the refutation of materialism in De Bonald's 'Récherches sur les Premiers Objets de nos Connaissances Morales' must be allowed to be an exception to the statement made above.

teenth century saw everywhere around them a state of things revolting to reason and moral feeling, and they condemned it justly in the name of reason and moral feeling. They proclaimed —they took for their watchwords—the rights of reason, the rights of conscience, the rights of man. They demanded that all that was received, established, traditional among men, should be questioned and sifted until it was ascertained whether it was in harmony with or contrary to these rights, and then retained or abolished accordingly. There was nothing wrong in this—nay, there was infinite good in it: but there was the possibility of wrong, there was danger in it. And these philosophers went more or less wrong. I do not say that they taught the supremacy of the individual reason and individual will; that they directly and explicitly invested the individual reason with the rights of universal reason, or represented the individual will to be a law unto itself. On the contrary, I regard that as a caricature of their teaching, and regret that the representations first of the theocratists, and then of writers like Hegel and Comte, should have given it so wide a currency, that it seems now almost useless to protest against the continued circulation of that piece of false and forged coin. They had, however, to a certain extent themselves to blame for the rise and spread of the misrepresentation. They did not guard against it. They did not insist as they ought to have done on the fact that reason and conscience can only judge the world aright, and reform it in virtue of a truth and justice, and of a standard of truth and justice, which are not of their own making; that reason and will, so far as they are merely individual, are simply prejudice and caprice, the very things which have given rise to the evils in history; that the individual judgment can see truth, and the individual will do what is right, only when they are in accordance with the universal reason and eternal will which pervade all history, and in which every institution, tradition, and custom, which has been "by ages consecrate," is to some extent participant. They advocated, therefore, the rights of reason or rights of man in a one-sided way; their teaching tended to become what the theocratists said it actually was, and not only tended to produce, but undoubtedly did in many cases produce, those practical evils

which the theocratists declared to be its necessary fruits. They gave, that is to say, an undue prominence to the principle of individualism; pushed it too far; and forgot the claims of the principle which limits it.

This caused in the way of reaction another party to arise, who could see only the evil which the principle of individualism had caused or occasioned, and who pushed the complementary principle of authority to a farther but contrary extreme. They saw that to make any man, however wise, and still more to make every man, however foolish, believe that any private judgment or private crotchet of his was entitled to as much deference as great institutions which had lasted for ages, and which were still satisfying in a large measure the reasons of vast masses of men, was not only to make them believe a falsehood, but a falsehood disruptive of the continuity between the present and the past of humanity, and incompatible with the existence of the family, the Church, or the State; one which meant, in fact, the entire dissolution of society. Hence they rushed into the breach to oppose it. The easiest way, however, of opposing a doctrine—that which first suggests itself, and which at first sight seems the most promising of success—is direct denial and the affirmation of the contrary,—the assertion and defence of the antagonistic principle as the exclusive truth. And this was how the reaction combated the Revolution. The principle of individual independence had been taught so as to be scarcely compatible, if not altogether incompatible, with that of social authority; now, that of social authority was so taught as to be incompatible with individual independence. Order had been sacrificed to progress; now, progress was sacrificed to order. The present had been glorified at the expense of the past; now, the past was glorified at the expense of the present. A theocracy was held forth as the very ideal of society, and democracy denounced as an insanity; passive obedience was represented as the source of all virtue, the exercise of individual independence as the cause of all evil; tradition, supernatural in its origin, as the source of all truth, and free inquiry as the source only of error.[1]

[1] The statement above requires limitation so far as M. Ballanche is concerned, because, although he traces all truth and excellence to faith and tradition, he at

Now, which of these two doctrines, thus held as antagonistic and mutually exclusive, was the truest expression of the spirit of modern thought? There could be but one answer; the men of the reaction themselves could not refuse for a moment to acknowledge that the Revolution was the legitimate heir of the preceding four centuries,—the completest assertion in politics of the same principles which the Renaissance had introduced into literature, the Reformation into religion, and Cartesianism into philosophy. They felt that their own doctrine was ancient as opposed to modern, and were too honest to conceal or disavow what they felt; on the contrary, they proclaimed their conviction that the last four centuries were wrong in root and branches, and nowhere more utterly and obviously wrong than in philosophy, which, if it have no other merits, has at least that of being ever the clearest expression of the spirit of its age. Its systems seemed to them to contradict and destroy one another, and to leave, as they passed in rapid succession, not a wrack behind, because all were based on the hopelessly false foundation that in order to find truth the mind must seek it in itself, in its own consciousness; and differed only as to what principle of the mind, what faculty of the conscious being, should be supposed to have in it the supreme criterion of certainty—whether sense, or feeling, or reason. Cartesians and Baconians, sensationalists and idealists, dogmatists and sceptics, in the judgment of the writers we are speaking of, alike started from the Ego or individual consciousness; and to reason from that, they were unanimously agreed, could only, if the reasoning were carried far enough, land in universal scepticism.[1]

The ground, they thought, on which the temple of truth ought to be raised, must be sought elsewhere; must be sought not *in* man but *out* of him. And the criterion of truth, they thought, must be sought not in the individual but in the race. The individual, they held, has no true life or light except in the

the same time makes a sincere and ingenious attempt to find a place, and even a wide place, for progress and freedom.

[1] All the arguments used by Broussais in his treatise 'De l'Irritation et de la Folie' (1828), and by Comte against the psychological method, the inductive study of consciousness, had been previously employed by De Bonald, De Lamennais, and D'Eckstein.

race. The theory of Rousseau that society originated in a contract, in the combination and compromise of a number of individual wills, was particularly hateful to them. "It is not individuals," says De Bonald, "which constitute society, but society which constitutes individuals, since individuals exist only in and for society."[1] "Man apart from society," says Ballanche, "is a mere potentiality."[2] So in like manner the race itself is maintained to have no true light or life except in God. The general reason of man is represented as the absolute rule of every particular reason, and the reason of God primitively revealed as the absolute rule and only true foundation of general reason. The reason of the individual when it seeks to guide itself wanders in darkness; and only by renouncing itself, only by the self-denial which constitutes faith in tradition, or common or catholic consent, does it unite itself to its kindred and its Creator, and come under the enlightenment of the true light which shineth in darkness, and lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

It was as a supposed philosophical basis for this doctrine that the theory of the origin and nature of language had in the eyes of all thinkers of the party a supreme practical importance, and that De Bonald's metaphysical elaboration thereof appeared to them to be the noblest of scientific achievements. According to that theory, man was the passive recipient of language, and with language of thought, language being not the product but the condition of thought. Language, holds De Bonald, contains all thought, and man can have nothing in his thought which is not revealed to him by his speech, the relation of thought and language being like that of light and the organ of vision; so that man can no more think without words, or otherwise than words will allow him, than he can see without light or anything else than what light discloses to him. Language, which is thus not merely the instrument but the very life and substance of intelligence, he further maintains, is of miraculous origin, or the immediate, as contradistinguished from the mediate, gift of God. In proof it is argued that it cannot have been invented by

[1] Théorie du Pouvoir Politique, pref. [2] Palingénésie, pref.

man's reason, for man has no reason until he has language; that Scripture represents it as the direct gift of God to the first parents of the human race, and that the truth of the Scripture representation is confirmed by philological research, which establishes the original unity and essential identity of languages; and that an examination of its nature clearly shows it to be far too complex and elaborate, far too perfect and difficult, to be the work of man. It is scarcely necessary to say that all the ingenuity which M. de Bonald expended on his theory was thrown away; that the view of the relation of language to thought on which he proceeds is the reverse of true, and even inherently absurd; and that the arguments adduced to establish the immediate divine creation or miraculous origin of human speech are either erroneous or irrelevant. The success of such a theory, indeed, would have been inexplicable, had not the way for it been prepared by the sensationalism of Condillac, and had it not been so obviously fitted to serve the interests of a party which represented the opinions of large classes of French society before and after the Restoration. In the latter light it is impossible to refuse to it a certain admiration. Its explanation of the origin of speech is equally an explanation of the origin of reason and of society, and consequently of all that reason has produced and society has experienced. It refers all origins to revelation, and makes tradition or the transmission of revelation the substance and life of history, the law and limit of rational and voluntary activity. It leads directly to the result which the theocratists were above all anxious to demonstrate—viz., that man is dependent for his intelligence, its operations so far as legitimate, and its conclusions, religious, political, moral, and social, so far as true, on tradition flowing from a primitive revelation.

That it was possible, even with this presupposition, to conceive of the course of history as one of progress towards freedom, was proved by M. Ballanche. He fully accepted the doctrine that language was a revelation, that it had been directly and immediately taught by God to the first man, that the words of God were what originally communicated thoughts to man; but he insisted on the gradual alteration and development both of

the contents and form of this revelation, both of language itself and the spiritual truths it conveyed; and even divided the whole movement of history into epochs corresponding to the chief phases through which language had passed. First, language was *merely spoken.* That was when man was in his *naïve* and graceful childhood; when all the world around him appeared in the colours of poetry; when religion was an intuition and inspiration; when reflection had scarcely dawned, and speculation and doubt were unknown; when song was the common channel by which the divine word passed from heart to heart. In this stage the sacred deposit of spiritual truth transmitted in language was in imminent danger of being corrupted, owing to the vague and unfixed character of its medium, or form, or vehicle; and society had to be distributed into castes, with priests and poets specially set apart to preserve and diffuse it in purity and power. But beautiful and graceful as the childhood of the race is, it must, like that of the individual, be outgrown. In the course of time thought ceases to be mere intuition, poetry, and faith; it becomes reflective, regular, less graceful, but more powerful and mature; and can consequently no longer be left to be merely uttered by the voice, merely spoken, but must be fixed in a visible and more permanent form, must be *written as well as spoken.* In this second stage of tradition, which is also the second great epoch of history, the priest and poet no longer suffice, and the philosopher arises to interpret or question their message and share in their authority. At the same time authority is weakened by being divided, inquiry spreads, activity finds new channels, and knowledge grows from more to more. Writing even perfected to the utmost is at length found insufficient to contain and convey the wealth of experience and ideas which has been acquired, and a new art is sought and discovered to satisfy the new demands which have arisen. Thenceforth thought is *not only spoken and written, but also printed.* It has reached its majority, and stands no longer in need of protection. It claims the completest freedom within the limits of reason and justice, and will, sooner or later, inevitably secure it. All castes and class privileges will disappear. All will know the truth, and the truth will make them free. Those who attempt to

obstruct humanity on its march towards its goal—the realisation of rational freedom—must fail and be put to shame.

Such is the general formula of historical development suggested by M. Ballanche. It is one which I need not occupy time in refuting, as no person can be in danger of accepting it. I merely remark, therefore, that it obviously implies and asserts that history is a progressive movement or growth, ever advancing and spreading into a broader liberty. Man is represented as dependent on revelation and tradition for all truth and excellence; yet revelation and tradition are represented as moving —and man is represented as moving with them—towards perfect freedom in every phase of life. In teaching thus, however, M. Ballanche occupied an exceptional, if not singular, position in the theocratic school. He gave its principles an application more ingenious than consistent, and certainly one which the founders of the school never meant them to have. Its true chiefs had no sympathy whatever with liberalism either in Church or State. They fought avowedly under the banner of absolute authority, and against the independence of reason. Faith, not reason, and submission, not freedom, seemed to them the true conditions of social existence.

They defended the cause of absolute authority alike in Church and State. As to the former, Liberal Catholicism, Protestantism, Deism, Atheism, were all condemned as but so many stages of deviation and descent from the true religion, the sure and eternal basis of social order. Papal infallibility was inculcated as not only a religious dogma, but the central truth of political science and the guiding principle of history, the recognition of which could alone secure peace, stability, and prosperity to nations. The inconsistencies of Gallicanism were unsparingly exposed; the whole Ultramontane creed was unflinchingly advocated. As to the State, sovereignty in the secular sphere, it was argued, corresponds to infallibility in the religious sphere, and must, like it, be one and indivisible, and entitled to unquestioning submission. "The revolution of the sixteenth century," says De Maistre, "ascribed the sovereignty to the Church—*i.e.*, to the people. The eighteenth century carried the principle into politics. It is the same system, the same

folly, only under another name." The temporal power ought to be subject, indeed, to the spiritual power, to which it is naturally inferior, because a more distant and a feebler emanation from the divine power; but it can only be limited from above, not from below—only by the Pope, not by its subjects; they have no right to judge it, and still less to resist it and to impose conditions on it. The constitutional government of our own country was in this light specially offensive to the genuine representatives of the theocratic school. De Maistre contemptuously pronounced it "an insular peculiarity utterly unworthy of imitation;" and De Bonald calmly said that, "mainly owing to its defects, the English are by far the most backward among civilised peoples." De Bonald's own type of a good government was ancient Egypt, with its Pharaohs surrounded by priests, and seated on the summit of an organised system of rigidly defined castes. It was characteristic of the adherents of the party to adopt as their own the social ideal of the medieval hierarchy. Naturally they glorified the personages and institutions which had come nearest realising it; and their doing so doubtless served the cause of historical justice, notwithstanding that their medievalism must be admitted to have been less the reflection of reality on reason than of their own feelings on their own imaginations.

That the theocratists should go to the Bible for their theorems of historical science was what was to be expected; and as revelation had not been given to supply men with anything of the sort, it was also to be expected that they would distort and pervert its doctrines in attempting to make them serve a purpose entirely different from that for which they were intended. And that was precisely what they did. I have already had to remark, that what may, for convenience, be called the Augustinian philosophy of history, is very superficial and unsatisfactory as a philosophy of history or scientific explanation of history; but the doctrines with which it seeks to elucidate history are substantially true doctrines, really drawn from Scripture—legitimate statements of verities made known through revelation, and more important by far than anything to be found in the ordinary records of humanity. The

theocratists themselves appear to have felt its insufficiency—appear to have felt that to say men were involved in the consequences of the Fall, and deeply interested in the workings of redemption, was, however true, rather a loose and meagre explanation of any historical incident, and still more of any historical epoch; but, instead of being warned by the failure of Augustine to cease altogether from the illegitimate application of Scriptural doctrines, they unfortunately deemed it their duty to twist and stretch them the more, and, indeed, to pervert them without measure or mercy. De Bonald's hypothesis of the revealed origin of speech and reason, science, art, and government, was an extravagant exaggeration of a few words of Scripture, which it was absurd to use at all in the discussion of a scientific problem. De Maistre professed to found on Scripture, but had no warrant for the profession when he represented all the evils which afflict society as only punishments, and punishments of original sin. Nothing can be more intensely unchristian, as well as inhuman, than his glorification of the scaffold, and vindication of war as an eternal ordinance of God and a fundamental law of the world. Nothing can be more opposed both to the spirit and to the letter of the Gospel than to maintain, as he does, that "the earth is for ever crying for the blood of man and beast"—that it is "an immense altar, on which all that lives must be immolated without ceasing and without end until the consummation of ages, the extinction of evil, the death of death"—that God has laid on man the charge of slaughtering his fellow-men, and has made wars, battles, the incessant effusion of human blood, a condition of pardon: and yet he passes off all these revolting falsehoods as deductions from the holy and merciful doctrine of expiation taught in revelation.

The theocratists, it need hardly now be said, were, one and all, men of utterly unscientific minds. Some of them had brilliant natural gifts and much acquired knowledge; but they were essentially dogmatists, rhetoricians, preachers, and pleaders—not men inclined by nature or qualified by training to seek truth in a proper and rational way. They were ignorant of what science and scientific method meant, and, of course, were

ignorant of their ignorance. So far as conscious honesty was concerned, men could not be honester; but their intellects were utterly untrustworthy, because they refused to conform to the laws of sound logical method, and were ruled and led by prejudice and passion. M. de Bonald was the acknowledged philosopher of the school; but how little he knew of true science is decisively shown by the fact that he took for scientific laws, for principles explanatory of real things, these two most absurd propositions—that all things are included under one or other of the three terms of thought, cause, mean, and effect—and that what the cause is to the mean, the mean is to the effect. In metaphysics, the trinitarian formula appears as God, mediator, and man; in religion, as the Church, priests, and laity; in the State, as king, ministers or nobles, and people; in the family, as father, mother, and child; and in the individual, as soul, sense, and body. All these special formulæ, M. de Bonald holds, correspond to one another in virtue of their common relation to the general formula; so that, for example, the king is in the State and the father in the family what God is in the universe; and further, the terms of each formula are related to one another as the terms of every other, the cause being always to the mean as the mean to the effect. The result is obvious, and yet startling—a complete theory of the theocracy, of absolutism in Church, State, and family, expressed in algebra.

I need not dwell longer on the theocratic system. Its historical place and purpose are not difficult to perceive. It was an extreme reaction from the excesses of the Revolution—just and useful as a reaction, wrong and retrograde because so extreme; yet even, perhaps through being extreme, serving in some respects better its end as antagonistic to another extreme. It was well that even in the nineteenth century people should hear all that could be said on behalf of the theocracy and passive obedience; and certainly De Maistre, De Lamennais, and De Bonald were very eloquent and ingenious, very able and sincere, advocates for them.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAINT-SIMON AND FOURIER.[1]

THERE was another class of thinkers who saw that the world could not and would not retrace its steps as the writers just mentioned would have it to do; and who, while feeling as deeply as they that society was pervaded by a sore and terrible disease, had very different ideas both as to the character and causes of the evil and as to the appropriate remedy. They shared in the ideas and continued the spirit of the Revolution; liberty, equality, and fraternity were to them no mere words, but the highest and most sacred truths, the last and noblest births of time. They saw, however, with great clearness and great sorrow, that they were as yet little more than abstractions. Christ may have taught them, and doubtless had; but then He had said also, "My kingdom is not of this world;" and these words, according to them, had been so understood or misunderstood as to render all His social teaching nugatory. The Church had shown by its doctrine and practice, persisted in through many centuries, that it would never make a single serious attempt to realise them. The medieval and monarchical state had required to be destroyed, in order that men might be free even to utter their

[1] Much the most thoughtful work which has yet been written on the socialistic movement is that of L. Stein—'Der Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreich,' 2 Aufl., 1848. The 'Études sur les Réformateurs ou Socialistes Modernes,' by M. Reybaud, has gone through many editions. In English there is Sargeant's 'Social Innovators.' Booth's 'Saint-Simon and Saint-Simonism' is a very thorough and able book, which has not received the attention it deserves. As the view I give of the relation of Saint-Simon to Comte is substantially that given by Mr Booth, while it differs from that commonly entertained, it may be proper to say that every line of my account was written before the publication of Mr Booth's work. The most attractive book on Fourier is, perhaps, M. Charles Pellarin's 'Fourier—sa Vie et sa Théorie,' 5e. ed., 1872.

names. The Revolution had not attained them, and that was why it was not yet finished. The Empire had rested on delusion and force, and had led to beggary and degradation. All the powers of the past had been proved incapable of regenerating society, of raising the masses, of extinguishing injustice and slavery; and so a new way must be attempted—reorganisation from the very foundations, and not merely some reform of religion or philosophy, of this institution or of that, which would leave the world much the same as before. It was also essential, these thinkers believed, to carry out this attempt in a direct way. It seemed to them very unfortunate that religion in its various forms had either entirely despaired of society, and aimed only at the salvation of individuals, or had assumed that society could only be saved, regenerated, through the salvation, regeneration, of individuals. Even the latter view, they said, is just the reverse of the truth. We must seek to regenerate individuals through the regeneration of society, by the establishment of new social arrangements and institutions; and as an essential condition we must persuade men to fix their eyes on a goal, not beyond the earth, but on it; and to regard religion, like everything else, as of value only in so far as it guides society to the great object of ameliorating the condition of the class the most numerous and poor. It was thus that Claude Henri de Saint-Simon and François Marie Charles Fourier, the founders of modern socialism, were led to their peculiar speculations. With these speculations we shall only concern ourselves so far as they have history for subject.

Saint-Simon had considerable power of historical insight and historical generalisation, and abounded in ingenious views on the course and tendencies of human development. He was a lavish sower of ideas. He was not, however, specially qualified to cultivate and reap them. He had a susceptible, original, and fertile mind, but not one whose habits of thought were scientific; and he seldom either adequately verified or developed what he had conceived. He was in this respect a contrast to M. Comte, whose distinctive merits lay much less in wealth and originality of conception than in persistent pursuit of scientific certainty, and power of elaborate co-ordination and construction. I agree

with those who think that almost all Comte's leading ideas on the philosophy of history may be found more or less plainly expressed in works written and either published or privately circulated by Saint-Simon before his acquaintance with Comte, which began in 1818 and came to a violent close in 1824. I find it simply inexplicable that any man, with a moderate knowledge of both writers, should contend, as some do, that Comte may have owed little or nothing to Saint-Simon; and yet, far from holding Comte a plagiarist or successful mediocrity, I place him decidedly higher than Saint-Simon, whose intellect, although more original, was at the same time much less powerful, and comparatively undisciplined. The work of the two men was different; both did real work of their own; although that of one of them was, so far at least as historical science was concerned, based to a considerable extent on that of the other.

The literary life of Saint-Simon began in 1802, and from 1807 to 1825, its activity was uninterrupted; from 1807 to 1814, general science was the chief subject on which it was occupied; from 1814 to 1824, political and social organisation; and a religion, "le nouveau Christianisme," was its latest product. The works which have most interest for us are the 'Introduction aux Travaux Scientifiques du xix^e^. Siècle,' the 'Mémoire sur la Science de l'Homme,' and the 'Travail sur la Gravitation Universelle;' and they all belong to what may be conveniently designated the scientific period of Saint-Simon's life, the first having been written and privately circulated in 1807-8, although not properly speaking published till 1832, and the two latter having been written and privately circulated in 1813 and 1814, although not properly speaking published till 1859. It is necessary, however, to add to the study of these works an acquaintance with the more important of Saint-Simon's other writings, as well as with the celebrated 'Exposition de la Doctrine Saint-Simonienne' of M. Bazard.

Saint-Simon had the merit of assigning to the science of history a clearly defined place in the general system of the sciences. The science of history forms, according to him, the second part of the science of man; that part which treats of the human species or race. The first part treats of man as an individual

composed of body and mind, and so comprises a physiological and psychological section. The whole science of man, however, is but a part of a more comprehensive science, physiology, which, as understood by Saint-Simon, includes biology, psychology, and the science of history. Mental action and historical evolution are both regarded by him as physiological functions; only the physiologist can hope to study either with success. M. Comte, I may here remark, partly followed and partly abandoned this view of Saint-Simon, merging psychology in physiology, and yet including historical evolution in the separate and final science of sociology. But surely consistency is on the side of the earlier thinker. If the progress of the individual mind be merely a biological function, how can the collective progress of any number of individual minds be an essentially different sort of function, the subject of a distinct and fundamental science? Physiology understood as stated, is further regarded by Saint-Simon as the last of a series of sciences which have gradually and slowly passed one after another out of a conjectural and theological state into a positive and properly scientific state. The entire movement of thought in history is from the one to the other of these states. The mind passes through a succession of religious phases,—fetichism, polytheism, deism,—and steadily substitutes for them in one department of inquiry after another those positive and scientific conceptions, the sum of which Saint-Simon designates by the word *physicism*. This law of two states is as fundamental in the system of Saint-Simon as the more celebrated law of three states in that of Comte; and the latter law differs from the former only by the insertion between its terms of the metaphysical state. M. Littré was bound to have remembered this circumstance when denying M. Hubbard's statement that the law of three states was borrowed from Saint-Simon. He is correct when he says that the law of three states is not enunciated in any of Saint-Simon's writings; but as there is undoubtedly often enunciated and constantly implied a law of two states, both included in Comte's three, he is quite mistaken when he affirms that as to the origination of Comte's historical conception Saint-Simon is *hors de cause*. So little is that the case, that Comte's own assertion of originality cannot be allowed

for a moment to weigh against the opposing texts and facts. Comte could not but have learned from Saint-Simon a law of two states substantially the same as that which has become so closely associated with his own name; one to which he only added a term which few even of his disciples seem to think on a parity with the other two, and which others of them appear not unwilling altogether to extrude. Comte may have been quite sincere in affirming the whole conception to have been his own; but the affirmation itself was certainly not true, and only showed how little either his memory or judgment could, after the rupture of 1822, be trusted as to his obligations to his former friend and master.

With the age of Bacon and Descartes, according to Saint-Simon, the day of positive sience began to dawn out of the night of theological conjecture. And first astronomy, with the help of mathematics, next physics, and then chemistry, came under the beams of the light; the reason of this order being that the facts of astronomy are the simplest, and those of chemistry the most complicated. Physiology, more concrete and complex still than chemistry, is as yet partly conjectural and partly positive, although on the eve of becoming completely positive. When it has done so, philosophy itself will attain to positivity. "For," to use our author's own words, "the special sciences are the elements of general science; general science, that is to say, philosophy, could not but be conjectural so long as the special sciences were so; was necessarily partly conjectural and partly positive when one portion of the special sciences had become special while another was still conjectural, and will be quite positive when all the special sciences are positive, which will happen when physiology and psychology are based on observed and tested facts, as there is no phenomenon which is not astronomical, chemical, physiological, or psychological. We know, therefore, at what epoch the philosophy taught in the schools will become positive." It is only when the sciences have all become positive that society can be rationally organised; for religion, general politics, morality, and education, are only applications of principles which must be furnished by science. Such is Saint-Simon's view of philosophy or general science, and of the place occupied therein by the

science of history. It is substantially the same, as I have said, with that of M. Comte, and as it is most explicitly stated in the 'Mémoire sur la Science de l'Homme,' written five years before the commencement of Comte's intercourse with Saint-Simon, there is no room for doubt that the former received it from the latter. It is quite in vain to say, as M. Littré does, that that work ought to be regarded as non-existent, seeing that although written in 1813 and sent to certain persons whose names are known, it was not published till 1859; for, first, the list to which M. Littré refers contains only the names of twenty-eight distinguished public men, leaving Saint-Simon, as sixty copies of his book were printed, thirty-two to dispose of among his personal friends and disciples at a time when these were very few; and further, the work is incontestable evidence that Saint-Simon possessed certain ideas in 1813, which it is simply impossible to believe he would not communicate to any person who was on such terms of intimacy with him as Comte was some years later.

It will be obvious from what has been said that Saint-Simon was aware of the closeness of the connection between the science of history and physical science. Indeed he conceived of it as far closer than he was warranted to do. He regarded the science of history as a physical science; in other words, refused to recognise the distinctions which exist between the physical and moral worlds, or at least that any of these distinctions necessitate essentially different explanations of physical and moral phenomena. He had consequently to attempt to bring physical law over into the moral world, and into history a province of the moral world. His attempt was a very curious one, and he himself came to acknowledge that it was unsuccessful. Fancying that the unity of the system of nature and the unity of science implied that there was one all-pervasive law from which every other law and fact in existence might be derived, he was led by obvious and superficial considerations to believe gravitation that law, and to maintain that it accounted for chemical and biological, and even mental and historical, phenomena; that gravitation was, in fact, *the law* of the universe, of the solar system, of the earth, of man, of society, or, generally, of the whole and all its

parts; and that if other laws had the appearance of independence, it was only because they had not yet been reduced under or deduced from it. The social atmosphere seems to have been full of ideas of this kind when he wrote; and although he was one of the least likely of men to escape their influence, it is only fair to remember that his rival Fourier was at the same time insisting with much greater emphasis that the central social law was what he called the law of passional attraction, which he believed to be a rigorous deduction from Newton's law; and M. Azais, with copious speech and too facile pen, was explaining everything in the material, mental, and social worlds by expansion. Of course it is scarcely necessary to say that all these attempts at universal explanation must be regarded as utter failures. No explanation of the kind aimed at has yet been reached even for the physical world, and scientific men seem coming to the conclusion that none is to be looked for; that there is, on the contrary, something inherently chimerical in the very attempt to bring biology under chemistry or chemistry under physics, and that each of these sciences must be held to have for objects phenomena with irreducible properties and laws. But if it be presumptuous to hope to reach a unity which will explain the vast variety of physical nature as proceeding from a single property and subjected to a single law; if our intellectual resources are too narrow and the physical universe too complex for this; if all that we know of the constitution of matter in relation to our minds warn us against the attempt,—assuredly it must be more presumptuous to hope to reach a unity so absolute that it will explain at once the phenomena of matter and of spirit, which have so little in common and so much in contrast. To establish that the law which regulates the action of material masses is likewise that which reigns in the reason, conscience, affections, and will of man, and which accounts for their evolution in history, must be regarded as a task far surpassing in difficulty any achieved by Newton; and it may safely be said that neither Saint-Simon, nor Fourier, nor Azais has given us anything designed to that end which has even the semblance of long-sustained reasoning and profound truth. It is easy to perceive the reason of their transference of physical law into the

spiritual sphere in the existence of certain analogies between the physical and the spiritual, which no one can deny, and the recognition of which is the source of metaphorical language; but in perceiving its reason we perceive also the vice of the whole procedure by which it is effected—perceive that the entire argumentation which leads to affirming spiritual fact to be reducible to material fact is a play with words, in which the mind cheats itself. To talk of the gravitation, or attraction, or expansion of the thoughts or feelings of the individual, or of the successive or co-existent states of society, is purely metaphorical language—that is, language expressive of what are analogies, and not to be confounded with identities, or of what Swedenborg has well described as discrete in contradistinction from continuous degrees. While thus aware, however, of the serious error committed by Saint-Simon, I cannot concede to M. Littré that it is conclusive against his claims to be ranked among positivists. It does not seem to me to have anything properly to do with that claim, but to be simply a case of false explanation of phenomena. It differs from Comte's own reduction of psychology under biology only in degree; it is a greater error, but the same sort of error. As it does not proceed on the assumption that the mind can know anything beyond phenomena and their laws, it cannot be pronounced, on the mere ground of falsity, inconsistent with positive philosophy. It must be further remarked that Saint-Simon does not appear to have promulgated the idea in any of his works written subsequently to 1814, and that he stated to M. Olinde Rodrigues that he had found reason to abandon it.

In the judgment of Saint-Simon, Vicq-d'Azir, Cabanis, Bichat, and Condorcet were those among his immediate predecessors who had advanced most the science of man; and Condorcet he regarded as the person who had done most for that part of the science of man which is conversant with history. He took, in fact, precisely the same view of the speculations in Condorcet's 'Esquisse' and of the relation of his own speculations to them which we find subsequently taken and expressed by Comte in both of his great works; that is to say, while censuring the exaggerations, the prejudices, the manifold errors of omission

and commission with which the book abounds, he accepted its leading principles, that man must be studied as a species no less than as an individual; that generations are so bound to generations that the species is progressive and perfectible; that human development is subject to law and passes through a series of phases; and that from the past the future may be so far foreseen, as true and fundamental, as requiring only development and a more careful application. He professed to do no more than to build on the foundation constituted by these principles.

The idea which Condorcet merely incidentally expresses, that "the progress of society is subject to the same general laws observable in the individual development of our faculties, being the result of that very development considered at once in a great number of individuals," seems to me the central principle of the Saint-Simonian philosophy of history. "L'intelligence générale et l'intelligence individuelle se développent d'après la même loi. Ces deux phénomènes ne diffèrent que sous le rapport de la dimension des échelles sur lesquelles ils ont été construits." This being his guiding thought, Saint-Simon naturally compares, as so many others have done, the periods of human life to the stadia of history. A fondness for building, digging, using tools, seems to him distinctive of childhood in the individual, and of the Egyptians in the race; a love of music, painting, and poetry, of youth from puberty to twenty-five, and of the Greeks; military ambition, of most men from that age till they are forty-five, and of the Romans among nations; while at forty-five the active forces of the individual begin to diminish, but his intellectual forces, imagination excepted, to increase, or at least to be better employed—and to this age corresponds the era of humanity inaugurated by the Saracens, to whom we are indebted for algebra, chemistry, physiology, &c. The race is now about the middle of its allotted course, or at that epoch when the human mind is in fullest possession both of imagination and reason. Our predecessors had, relatively to reason, too much imagination, and our descendants will have too little. A year of individual life probably answers to about two centuries in that of the species. It was thus that our author worked out a parallelism which is too fanciful to require criticism. But his principle led him

to other thoughts which, whether true or not, are at least suggestive.

One of these is the doctrine of an ever-recurring alternation of organic and critical periods in history. It is constantly implied, and often partially stated by Saint-Simon; but its clearest expression is due to Bazard, who in this as in several other instances, has expounded his master's thought better than he succeeded in doing himself. The doctrine is to this effect. The human spirit manifests its rational activity in analysis and synthesis, in ascending from particulars to generals, and in descending from generals to particulars. These are the two directions either of which it may, and one of which it must, take when it reasons; an upward and downward, an *a posteriori* and *a priori* direction. The general process inclusive of both, Saint-Simon proposed should be designated by the rather extraordinary name of *the Descartes.* The twofold procedure of reason is not confined to the individual mind, but regulates the development of the race as a whole. Societies, like individuals, employ sometimes analysis and sometimes synthesis; and this determines whether the epoch which they pass through will be critical or organic. All history may be divided into critical periods and organic periods. The critical periods are those in which the minds of men are employed in investigating the principles of the government under which they live, in endeavouring to amend old institutions and to invent new ones; in which no creed commands the assent of all, so that society is without principles, discontented, changeful, and, in a word, in a state of anarchy. Organic periods, on the contrary, are those which possess an accepted doctrine, in which society is cemented by the synthesis of a common faith, in which the actual institutions give satisfaction to the world, and men's minds are at rest. Thus pre-Socratic Greece was organic — post-Socratic Greece, critical. Roman history began to pass from organic to critical with Lucretius and Cicero. With the definitive constitution of the Christian Church in the sixth century began the new organic period of feudalism; and in the sixteenth century the Reformers inaugurated another critical period which the philosophers have continued until the present time, when the

great want of society is not more analysis, not the continuance of criticism, but a new synthesis, a new doctrine.

The correspondence between individual and social development suggested likewise to Saint-Simon a mode of giving increased extension and precision to the idea of progress or perfectibility which Condorcet had insisted on. It seemed to him that that idea had hitherto been barren, because there had been no vigorous attempt in presence of a vast variety of the facts of history to co-ordinate them into homogeneous series with the terms so connected as to manifest laws of increase or decrease. All the facts of history, such as equality, liberty, authority, war, industry, could be, he thought, thus ranged, so as to show regular growth or decadence in the past, and such as might therefore be anticipated in the future. Hence, besides the classification of the facts of history into critical and organic, he endeavours to exhibit three great subordinate or auxiliary series, answering to the three great phases of human nature. In that nature there are intelligence, sentiment, and physical activity. The products of intelligence are the sciences of sentiment, religion, and the fine arts; of physical activity, industry. Saint-Simon tries to form serial co-ordinations of these products in order to find the laws of development of the principles which have originated them, and imagines that here too he discovers an alternative movement of analysis and synthesis, of the *a posteriori* and *a priori* method.

He makes another important use of the series when he attempts to arrange the various societies on the earth in a scale graduated according to their mental development. He points out that every degree of culture from the lowest barbarism to the highest civilisation is represented somewhere; and on this principle describes what he considers the different stages or terms. The lowest he illustrates by the state of the savage of Aveyron at the time of his capture; the second by the savages of Magellan's Straits, without fire, without houses, or chiefs; the third by some tribes on the north-west coast of America, unable to count beyond three, and with the merest rudiments of a language and chieftainship; the fourth by the cannibal New Zealanders; the fifth by the inhabitants of the Friendly Society

and Sandwich Islands; the sixth by the Peruvians and Mexicans as discovered by the Spaniards; the seventh by the Egyptians; after whom the series becomes chronological or strictly historical, its eighth term being the Greeks; its ninth, the Romans; its tenth, the Saracens; its eleventh, European society founded by Charlemagne; and the twelfth, that which is rising on its ruins. A general glance at this scale or series, and still more a close study of the fifty pages devoted to its consideration, will disclose many defects. Some of them, however, were inevitable in the wretched condition in which ethnology was half a century ago; and had they been even more numerous, they would not have annulled the merits of the general conception and of the attempt to realise it; a conception on which well-known and very able works by Sir John Lubbock and Mr Tylor are based, and on which many other works, we may safely say, will be based; a conception which so links together ethnology and history as to allow of their giving full assistance to each other. The greatest error into which Saint-Simon fell in connection with it seems to me to have been his making it the expression of an hypothesis, instead of regarding it simply as a mode of arranging facts in such a way as might be hoped would eventually lead to the scientific proof of a theory. He assumed that the lowest stage of culture was representative of the oldest; that man made his first appearance on earth as a speechless and disgusting brute, and gained his present height of attainment step by step. It may be so; but that assumption is one thing, and the series itself is another. And it cannot be regarded as otherwise than in the main a misfortune that the ruder races of mankind have been studied even by ethnologists with undue reference to the question, whether or not barbarous peoples can civilise themselves. Theological prepossessions of an opposite character have led some to affirm and others to deny that they can, with an emphasis and assurance out of all proportion to the evidence; and, in the case of most of those who claim to speak merely in the name of science, with a singular forgetfulness that *its* first duty must be to collect and analyse all that is to be learned regarding the ruder tribes of the world, and its next to endeavour without prejudice to ascertain what are the various

stages of social elevation or degradation, and what the laws of transition from the one to the other; and that only through the accomplishment of these two duties can it hope successfully to solve the problem of the origin of civilisation.

The opinions of Saint-Simon on particular events and institutions of history, on individual personages and various periods and nations, always show an original mind richly productive of ingenious suggestions; but they are at the same time often vitiated by false social principles, sometimes by religious prejudices, and rarely perhaps based on adequate research. These opinions, however, time and space forbid my examining; and I pass to Charles Fourier.

The mind of Saint-Simon was very peculiar, but that of Fourier was far more so. Indeed I must candidly avow that I believe him to have been in some respects insane. As in the case of Swedenborg, I can find no other explanation of much that he wrote than a strange and subtle sort of insanity, an insane belief as to seeing and hearing what was done in the world of spirits, coexisting with great general strength of mind, and especially great religious discernment; so in Fourier, while admitting his ability in certain directions, I cannot but consider him to have been under the sway of a positively insane imagination, and a positively insane belief in the wonderful things soon to happen on the earth. Condorcet was too credulous as to human perfectibility; but what is to be said of a man who believed that the world was to be improved until the ocean should be lemonade, zebras as much used as horses, and herds of llamas as common as flocks of sheep; until men should live three or four hundred years, and there would be on the globe thirty-seven millions of poets equal to Homer, thirty-seven millions of philosophers equal to Newton, and thirty-seven millions of writers equal to Molière? It is quite safe to say that the principle of perfectibility, liable as it is to perversion, will never be more perverted than it has been, since nobody can in that line outdo Fourier.

His speculations on history, which I shall describe as briefly as I can, rest partly on a cosmogony indescribably absurd, but mainly on a curious psychology, which, though essentially erroneous, is not unmixed with important truths. He claims to have found the fundamental law of society, — that which explains its past and enables us to foresee its future,—in the nature and workings of the passions, which he reduces to twelve primitive tendencies, the sources of all action, progress, and enjoyment. The first five are the sensitive, and have the senses for organs, and stimulus to industry for their function. The next four consist of love, friendship, ambition, and familism, which originate the smaller social groups and the virtues which find therein appropriate exercise. The final three are the butterflyish (*papillonne*), or craving for change, the spirit of party (*passion cabaliste*), and the enthusiasm caused by the simultaneous enjoyment of many sensuous and mental pleasures (*passion composite*); these have hitherto been only sources of suffering and vice, but were designed to combine and conciliate the sensuous springs of action with the social affections, and will be of unspeakable service in the reign of harmony and in those phalanges or *phalanstères* which are to regenerate the world. The satisfaction of all these tendencies or passions, the harmony of the whole inner and outer man with himself and the world, is *unitèisme* or religion; and the law according to which human nature moves onward to its realisation is their attraction when left free and unthwarted. It is on this law, a deduction from the Newtonian law, that the welfare of society entirely depends. The passions are not to be checked and resisted,—all the misery in the world has arisen from the false belief that that is necessary,—they are to be allowed full scope, and they will produce a social system as orderly and perfect as is the sidereal system. What has to be done is not to curb and crush the passions into conformity with the social medium, but to modify that medium till it offers no opposition to the freest and fullest development of the passions. Fourier claims to have devised a social mechanism, according to the diversity and intensity of individual attractions, which would

completely secure this end, and make every person ineffably happy.

The closest and most comprehensive connection exists between man and the earth on which he lives. About 80,000 years is the duration assigned to both; and the history of the one will be found to correspond at every stage with that of the other. The earth is bad when man is bad,—contains noxious beasts, and behaves itself ill because he has perverted appetites and conducts himself irrationally,—and will ameliorate itself as he grows better; the simple change, for instance, of sea-water into lemonade, will purge the ocean by a sudden death of legions of useless and frightful marine monsters, images of our passions, and replace them with a crowd of new creations, amphibious servants for the use of fishermen and sailors; while a *boreal crown* will bring about marvels as great for the good of landsmen. The 80,000 years of human history divide themselves into thirty-two periods, naturally reducible to four great periods which correspond to the infancy, youth, manhood, and old age of the individual. The first of these four periods, the phase of infancy, is as yet nowhere outgrown, although only 5000 years has been allotted to it. It includes seven of the lesser periods: (1.) *Edènisme*, the primitive paradisiacal state in which men satisfied their simple wants without artificial production and social organisation, and enjoyed a "shadow of happiness." (2.) *Sauvagerie*, a state of strife and dissatisfaction arising from an excess of population relatively to the means of subsistence. (3.) *Patriarchat*, paternal despotism, the first attempt at government. (4.) *Barbarie*, the result of the conflict of families with one another, the reign of brute force. The succession of these periods shows on the whole declension, or decrease of good and increase of evil, but a process of improvement now sets in. (5.) Civilisation is the stage which the more advanced nations of the world have now arrived at. (6.) *Garantisme* is a condition which partially shows itself in the attempts at association, and at securing individual interests through collective guarantees, which are becoming increasingly common. And (7.) The state of *séries ébauchées*, or dawn of happiness, is the transition

to the second great period of time, the adolescence of society. At this point humanity "makes a leap (*fait un saut*) out of chaos into harmony." Harmony is to last about 70,000 years, and will include two great periods of about 35,000 years each, those of the youth and manhood of the race, the former consisting of nine lesser periods of gradually increasing happiness, and the latter of the same number of such periods of gradually decreasing happiness. The height or fulness of happiness is to last 8000 years. When the close of the third great period, or twenty-fifth lesser period, is reached, humanity is to take a second leap, but this time, unfortunately, *out of* harmony into chaos, and the epoch of its old age will begin, to go on declining through seven stages corresponding to those of infancy but following in the reverse order of: (1.) traces of happiness; (2.) *garantisme;* (3.) *civilisation;* (4.) *barbarie;* (5.) *patriarchat;* (6.) *sauvagerie;* (7.) *séries confuses.* The last scene of all is the abolition of our race, the extinction of life, the bursting up of the earth, and the scattering of its fragments among the star-dust of the Milky Way.

It will be apparent, even from this outline, that Fourier must either have talked a vast amount of wildest nonsense or been endowed with unparalleled powers of prophecy. All that he says of the last three of his four ages must be absurdity or prophecy. In the former case, I have no right to waste time on it; and in the latter, as I have never been able to make anything of unfulfilled prophecy of any kind, I must leave his predictions to those who have higher gifts of interpretation. The only portion of his speculations as to the development of humanity which has any meaning, to my mind, is that which refers to what he calls the period of its childhood, and even that is at one important point in contradiction to geological discovery. Where he displays his powers to most advantage is in the criticism of the characteristics and tendencies of "civilisation," the existing constitution of society. The chief strength of all socialism lies in that; but probably none of its advocates has surpassed Fourier in insight into the weaknesses and vigorous portrayal of the darker aspects of modern life.

The notion that the collective movement of humanity is like

the course of the individual through infancy, youth, manhood, and age, is applied to the lesser periods of history as well as to its total development. Each of these lesser periods is thus like Leibnitz's monads—a sort of mirror of the whole. Those, however, who wish to know more of this and other views of Fourier on history, must be referred to two of his own works, —the 'Théorie des Quatre Mouvements,' published in 1808, and 'Le Nouveau Monde Industriel,' published in 1829.

CHAPTER IX.

COUSIN AND JOUFFROY.

I.

We have now seen what sort of historical speculations were produced both by reactionary and revolutionary political thought in France after the re-establishment of the monarchy. There was, however, another order of thought, a third class of thinkers, a party of compromise, who regarded constitutional government as the end of the entire evolution of humanity; who received the charter of Louis XVIII. as their creed; and who felt themselves impelled to historical research, in part at least by the felt need of defending the various elements and institutions of France, as constituted after the restoration. The two chiefs of this party were Victor Cousin, the founder of the Eclectic School of Philosophy, and François Pierre Guillaume Guizot, the parliamentary leader of the Doctrinaires; both of whom have claims to a place in any account of the progress of historical speculation.

M. Cousin (1792-1867), although not endowed with great speculative ability, did vast service both to philosophy and history by his eloquence and charms as an orator and writer, his translations, his brilliant expositions of systems, and his power of stimulating others to investigation.[1] It was in the lectures delivered at Paris in 1828 to an admiring audience of two thousand persons that he propounded his theory of history. By that time he had completed the series of his changes in philosophy, and brought into its final form his system of an impar-

[1] There are Eloges of M. Cousin by M. Mignet and M. Jules Favre. His general philosophy has been treated of by Damiron, by Alaux, by Secretan, by Janet, &c. I do not know of any careful study either of his historical philosophy or of that of M. Jouffroy.

tial and catholic eclecticism, capable, as he deemed, of separating the true from the false in all anterior systems, and of exhibiting all truths which had hitherto appeared opposed in their living harmony. He has himself described, in the famous prefaces to the two first editions of his 'Fragments,' the successive steps of his philosophical career, with a candour which should have rendered impossible such a caricature of it as Mr Lewes has thought proper to give in his 'History of Philosophy,' and with a truth which cannot fail to be substantiated by any moderately fair examination of his works in their chronological order. It is not necessary for us, however, to consider either how his system was formed or what was its general character, but only that part of it which relates to history, and the whole of which is contained in the 'Cours de 1828.' It was the last part added, and it is that on which the influence of Hegel is most apparent; regarding which it must be remembered, that although Hegel's 'Philosophy of History' was only published in 1837, Cousin was not only acquainted with the outlines of world-history contained in the 'Encyclopædia' (1817) and the 'Philosophie des Rechts' (1820), but during a stay of some months at Berlin, in 1824-25, had met Hegel and become intimate with some of his most zealous disciples, Gans, Hotho, Henning, and Michelet; and again, in 1827, had enjoyed a month of Hegel's society in Paris. It is probable, therefore, that Cousin derived his views on historical optimism, war, great men, and some of the other subjects treated of by him in the lectures of 1828, directly or indirectly from Hegel; certainly his intercourse with Hegel must have confirmed him in them. The dominating political motive of the two men was the same, a circumstance which must have furthered their philosophical communion on such themes. Cousin, like Hegel, wished to stand well with the powers that be; to persuade them that the spirit of his philosophy and of the constitution were identical; that eclecticism was governmental and the charter a true eclecticism; indeed, in his closing lecture for 1828, he enthusiastically assured his hearers that "this charter contains, at the same time, the throne and the country, monarchy and democracy, order and liberty, aristocracy and equality, all the elements of history, of thoughts, and of things."

The first three lectures endeavour to determine the place of philosophy, and its history in universal history. Psychological analysis is employed as the only process by which this can be effected. The wants of the human mind are examined, and found to be reducible to five fundamental wants, each of which has corresponding to it a general idea,—the idea of the useful giving rise to mathematical and physical science, industry, and political economy; the idea of the just to civil society, the State, and jurisprudence; the idea of the beautiful to art; the idea of God to religion and worship; and the idea of truth in itself, in its highest degree and under its purest form, to philosophy. These ideas are argued to be simple and indecomposable, to coexist in every mind, to constitute the whole foundation of humanity, and to follow in the order mentioned. But if human nature manifests itself in the individual, it manifests itself also in the race, the history of which is, in fact, but the representation of human nature on a great scale. There is in the race only the elements which are in the individual. The unity of civilisation is in the unity of human nature, its varieties in the variety of the elements of that nature; and all that is in human nature passes into the movement of civilisation to subsist, organise itself, and prosper, if essential and necessary, but soon to be extinguished if accidental and individual. Therefore, as human nature is the matter and the base of history, history is, so to speak, the judge of human nature, and historical analysis is the counter-proof of psychological analysis. History, called in to the help of analysis, shows us that civilisation—the magnified image of human nature—includes at all epochs a philosophic element, which has a distinct, always subsisting, and continually increasing part or history on the stage of the world, and that what philosophy is to the other elements of human nature and civilisation, the history of philosophy is to the other branches of universal history; in other words, the history of philosophy is the last of all the developments of history, but superior to them all,—the only one in which humanity knows itself fully, with all its elements borne, as it were, to their highest power, and set in their truest and clearest light.

M. Cousin had the great merit of seeing distinctly how

psychology and the philosophy of history are related. He saw that the latter has its root in the former; that the science of history is properly a psychological science; that it presupposes a knowledge of the fundamental powers, affections, and laws of the human mind and character; and that historical analysis may supplement and correct, but can neither be severed from nor substituted for, psychological analysis. This he certainly did not learn from his German masters; on the contrary, he had to avow it with the consciousness that by doing so he forfeited, in their opinion, all claim to be deemed a genuine philosopher. That Schelling and Hegel, while valuing a friendship so ardent and useful as his, entertained no high opinion of his philosophical ability, has told most unduly to his prejudice; for what their opinion in the main really signified was, that Schelling and Hegel had both committed themselves, on the fundamental problem of philosophical method, to a thoroughly false position, and were logically bound to condemn, as wanting in speculative courage, any man who insisted on keeping his feet on the ground, instead of throwing himself headlong over a precipice into the air. I cannot quite accept Sir William Hamilton's estimate of Cousin—I think it too high—but it is entitled to profound respect as the judgment of an able man, based on rational grounds, whose praise, consequently, involves truth, even if not exactly according to truth, and whose censure is the just censure that Cousin is not faithful enough to his own method, and therefore occasionally rash and conjectural; whereas, whatever may have been Schelling's ability, his estimate is entitled to no respect at all, because based on grounds utterly irrational,—nay, his praise is blame and his blame praise; for his praise means that where it is bestowed fancy has got the better of reason, and his blame that reason has been duly reverenced. It was the fault of Cousin, as an historical philosopher, to have deferred so much to the authority of Schelling and Hegel; and his merit to have, notwithstanding their influence and example, preserved his faith in the only method which is sound and scientific. And here I cannot but remark that Mr John S. Mill is strangely mistaken when he ascribes to "M. Comte alone, among the new historical school," the honour

of having "seen the necessity of connecting all our generalisations from history with the laws of human nature." Scarcely any one has seen that necessity less than M. Comte, who, instead of connecting the empirical laws of the social movement with the psychological and ethnological laws on which they depend, has, as Mr Mill is well aware, denied the possibility of psychological analysis, and the very existence of psychology as distinct from physiology. M. Cousin, on the other hand, has seen the necessity, as clearly as Mr Mill himself has seen it, which is, perhaps, about as clearly as any man need hope to see it.

In the fourth lecture M. Cousin proceeds to treat of the psychological method in history. He argues that the historical method can be neither exclusively empirical nor exclusively speculative, by which he means deductive, but both in union; and thus far he still seems to me right. His next step, however, I venture to regard as false. The historical method, he argues, which unites speculation with empiricism in a legitimate manner, must start from the human reason, enumerate completely its elements, reduce them, by a severely scientific analysis, to the lowest number possible, determine their relationship, and follow their development in history, with the hope of discovering that the historical development is an expression of the internal development of reason. And accordingly, he sets about laying the foundation of this method by a study of the categories of thought, and reaches the result that in the last analysis the constitutive and regulative principles of reason are three: the idea of the infinite, otherwise called unity, substance, the absolute, &c.; the idea of the finite, likewise designated plurality, difference, phenomenon, relative existence, the conditioned, &c.; and the idea of the relation between the infinite and the finite, a relation which so unites the two terms that they are inseparable, and, along with itself, constitute at the same time a triplicity and an indivisible unity.

Now, obviously, human reason is here surreptitiously substituted for human nature. Why limit the field from which deductions applicable to history may be drawn to reason, a single part or faculty of human nature? Why exclude any-

thing truly belonging to that nature? Cousin does not give any explicit, reasoned answer. He makes an attempt to show that in every act of consciousness the three terms or ideas which have been specified are involved as conditions, and forthwith proceeds to argue as if he had thereby reduced all the phenomena of consciousness to these terms, in strange obliviousness of there being a great difference between the detection of the formal or metaphysical conditions of consciousness and the analysis of consciousness into its real or psychological elements. It appears never to have occurred to him that he might have succeeded in discovering the ultimate categories of reason, and yet have the inquiry into human nature as the basis of history to begin—that the conditions implied in the possibility of reason are not the laws of the development of reason, and still less of those principles which are distinct from reason. He abandons, in fact, without seeming to know that he is doing so, the great truths with which he starts—viz., that the matter of history is human nature in its entirety, in all its wants, faculties, and principles, and that a science of history can be founded on no narrower basis than the whole of psychological science supplies; and seeks to build on reason alone, or rather not even on reason, as a positive principle of the mental constitution and life—which is the only sense in which it is a true factor of history—but on abstract ideas of reason with which metaphysics is conversant, but with which the science of history has nothing more to do than the science of chemistry. He thus sacrifices in practice the important truths he holds in theory, and in consequence becomes a victim to Teutonic sophisms of the most superficial and misleading character.

It is soon apparent that he has got into a wrong path. The next three lectures treat of the fundamental ideas of history—the great epochs of history—and the plan of history—in a manner the most unsatisfactory. The reduction of reason into three ideas is supposed to have already determined all the conclusions to be come to on these points, and the course of actual history is referred to only as affording illustrations of truths obtained independently of the study of it. I pass over without criticism, as properly falling within the provinces of the theo-

logian and metaphysician, what is said in these lectures as to the ideas of the infinite, finite, and their relation belonging not to man but to absolute intelligence, as to their constituting the nature of Deity, and necessitating and explaining the creation of the universe; and content myself with stating how the formula which is alleged to elucidate mysteries so profound is applied to history.

The development of intelligence is described as of a twofold nature, spontaneous and reflective; the former, taking place in all men without exception, instinctively and involuntarily, is a primitive, impersonal, and universal fact; the latter, displaying itself in a marked degree only in the philosophical few, is a secondary, personal, and particular fact. Reflection presupposes and is occasioned by spontaneity. It is a sort of reversal of the spontaneous process, a going over it again from the opposite point, an analysing of it, a scrutiny of its conditions and rules. It adds nothing new, nothing of its own, to it, but only seeks to account for it, to find how it has reached its present stage and character, out of what principles it has grown up, and what elements it includes. To effect this end it is necessitated to decompose, separate, distinguish. To apprehend clearly the different constituent elements which are all confusedly united in spontaneous consciousness, it must apprehend them one by one, and while intent on the contemplation of any one, must extrude from its sight the others. Hence clearness, but hence also error. Error is one of the elements of thought taken for the whole of thought; an incomplete truth converted into an absolute truth. No other error is possible, because thought, if it exist at all, must possess some one of the elements which constitute it, some element of reality. Reflection, therefore, always includes truth, and almost always error, because it is almost always incomplete. And error necessitates difference between men. The primitive unity of spontaneous intelligence, not supposing distinction, admits neither of error nor difference; but reflection, in discriminating the elements of thought, and considering them separately and exclusively, produces error, and variety of error or difference. Hence the different epochs of individual existence, which are only the stages caused by a change

in ideas, by variations in the points of view of reflection. Hence, further, the differences of men compared with one another. It is impossible for them to agree together to consider at the same time the same side of thought and of things, and so they necessarily differ, fail to comprehend one another, and even despise one another. He who is exclusively preoccupied with the idea of unity and infinity, pities the man who enjoys the finite world, life in its movement and variety; and he who is wholly attached to the interests and pleasures of this world, regards as a fool the man whose thoughts and affections are centred on the invisible principle of existence. Most men are thus merely halves or quarters of men, and can become entire men only by delivering themselves from the exclusiveness which renders them unable to comprehend others, and by realising in themselves all the elements of humanity.

It is with the human race as with individuals. What reflection is to the individual, history is to the race. It is the condition of the successive evolution of all the essential elements of humanity, and has consequently epochs, an epoch being nothing else than the predominance of one of the elements of humanity during the time necessary for it to display all the powers which are in it, and to impress itself upon industry, the State, art, religion, and philosophy. As the essential elements of thought are three, no more and no less, the epochs of history must be three, no more and no less. The three elements are, indeed, to some extent in each epoch; but each one of them, in order to run through its whole development, must have an epoch to itself. The three epochs succeed each other in a necessary order. It is not man himself, not the sentiment of the *me* and of liberty, which is dominant in new-born reflection, but the sense of feebleness, the consciousness of dependence upon the infinite, upon God: and as it is thus in the individual life, so, too, the first epoch of humanity is necessarily pervaded with the sentiment of the misery and nothingness of man, and filled with the idea of the infinite, of unity, of the absolute, and of eternity. The growth of reflection in the individual gives rise to a feeling of personal freedom and power; and equally the exercise of liberty leads humanity to feel the charm of the world and of

life, and to yield itself up exclusively thereto, which is the reign of personality, the epoch of the finite. Having exhausted the extremes, there is nothing left either for the individual or the race but to unite and harmonise them; and so the two epochs of the infinite and finite are necessarily succeeded by a third which reconciles them and sums them up, impresses everywhere upon industry, the State, art, religion, and philosophy, the relation of the finite and the infinite; and thus gives to that relation its own expression in history, its own empire.

Such are the epochs of history, and the order of their succession; but under the relation of succession lies one of generation. The first epoch of humanity begets the second, and the fertile residua of the two first epochs combine to produce the third. Although the different epochs of humanity are wholes which have each a life of its own, humanity itself is an active and productive force which pervades them all, and an organic whole which comprehends them all. The truth of history is therefore not a dead truth, or one confined to any particular age, but a living and growing truth, which comes forth gradually from the harmonious work of ages, and which is nothing less than the progressive birth of humanity. It is more. History reflects not merely the movement of humanity, but of God's action on and in humanity. It is the government of God made visible. And as His government must be like His character, perfect, everything in history must be in its place, must be reasonable, and for the greatest good of all things.

This is M. Cousin's celebrated theory of historical development, stated, as far as possible, in the words of its author. It is impossible to deny to it a certain sort of grandeur and plausibility; but it fails at almost every point to satisfy the legitimate demands of science. The distinction between spontaneity and reflection with which it starts was one to which M. Cousin attached great importance, but which, it seems to me, he never succeeded in clearly and distinctly apprehending. He regarded spontaneous reason as reason in itself, as absolute or impersonal reason, as consequently incapable of error, and a sure foundation for the authority of universal beliefs; and reflective reason as that which is modified and guided by will, the principle, accord-

ing to him, in which personality consists; and therefore as individual, variable, and subject to error. Now this is untenable. Spontaneous thought does not differ from reflective thought by being unaccompanied and uninfluenced by will. The progress of spontaneous thought, like all progress in thought, implies throughout the active concurrence of the will with the intelligence. In the course of that progress, which embraces human history in all its length and breadth, arts have been invented and sciences evolved, poems written, moral creeds elaborated, religions established, complex and durable civilisations built up: and although the mind has not proceeded along this lengthened road with a clear perception of the goal to which it leads, neither has it taken steps in utter darkness; and as little has it been driven on by any fatalistic force either over it or within it. It has had light and freedom sufficient to make it responsible for each successive step, as it became right that it should be taken. The will has everywhere been present, choice everywhere called for, error everywhere possible. To speak, as M. Cousin does, of spontaneous intelligence as instinctive, is, taken literally, no less absurd than to speak of white blackness or a circular square.

But worse remains to be said even on this point. M. Cousin, instead of drawing a consistent distinction, has merely mixed up and confounded a number of distinctions. When he distinguishes spontaneous from reflective intelligence by characterising the former as immediate, involuntary, and incapable of error, the only real mental fact which corresponds to it is perception external or internal, and reflection includes the whole of what is commonly called thought. Of course, this was not the distinction which he wished to draw; and, of course also, he believed in a kind of intuition distinct from the perceptive and introspective: but he gave no evidence for his belief, and, so far as I can ascertain, there is none to be given. Perhaps he was himself conscious of the weakness of his position psychologically, and may have thought to escape the charge of inventing a faculty by describing the primitive act of affirmation in which there is no intervention of will *not as an intuition but as an inspiration*, a veritable revelation. But if not the invention of a faculty, this

was still the arbitrary assertion of a fiction. M. Cousin gives us merely his word for the extraordinary statement that veritable inspiration is anterior to all reflection. I do not know of any fact which can be adduced in its favour. Were it true, inspiration might be the cause of babies crying; but could hardly be what M. Cousin calls it, "the sacred source of prophecies, pontificates, and modes of worship." Observe, too, that even if we grant the reality of an inspiration which can be identified with spontaneity, reflection will include, if not the whole, nearly the whole of thought. While, however, a part of what we are told of the distinction between spontaneity and reflection is true only of the distinction between perception and thought, another part of it is true only of that between ordinary and scientific thought, or, more accurately, between the lower and higher stages of thought. When spontaneous intelligence is described as comparatively obscure and confused, reflective intelligence as comparatively clear and distinct; when it is admitted that the former really, although slowly, progresses through the ages, and constitutes the thinking of the mass of men, while the latter is characteristic of the philosophic few,—a difference of degree is presented to us as a distinction of kind. Science differs from ordinary knowledge not absolutely or specifically, but relatively and in degree. Science has grown out of ordinary knowledge, and ordinary knowledge is on the way to become science. The knowledge which enables the rudest savage to satisfy his simplest wants, and the broadest and best-established generalisations of the most advanced living astronomer or chemist, are merely the extremes of a process which has been continuous, and which has gradually filled up the whole distance between them. Then, another, a third distinction seems to me to be the only one which will answer to that part of M. Cousin's account which refers the origin of religion and poetry to spontaneity, and of philosophy to reflection—viz., the distinction between thought combined with and thought separated from emotion. This, also, is only a difference of degree; for a complete severance of thought from emotion is impossible; and it is further, properly speaking, no division of thoughts themselves into kinds. But, strange to say, there is at least another,

a fourth distinction with which that under consideration is identified—viz., that of thought which works on objects given to it, and of thought which makes itself its own object; of thought which deals with exterior things in order to ascertain their natures and laws, and of thought which studies and analyses its own processes. This *is* a distinction of kind and not of mere degree; for, thus understood, reflection is not the continuance of spontaneity, not a further stage of the same process, although it presupposes and is occasioned by it; but is a sort of reversal of it, a going over it again from an opposite point and with an opposite aim. It is only when M. Cousin's distinction of spontaneous and reflective intelligence is understood as equivalent to this distinction that the statement that reflection, in going over the processes of spontaneous thought, adds to them nothing new, and not a few other statements which he has made, can be received as true. Perhaps the general impression his account leaves is that this was the distinction he had in view, but that he altogether failed to steady his eye upon it. It was certainly, I think, the distinction which he should have drawn, and to which he should have exclusively adhered. But then, if this be the distinction, spontaneous intelligence may be very clear and precise, and reflective intelligence very obscure and confused. The great mass of thought will be what is called spontaneous thought, and it need not necessarily be vaguer, or shorter, or easier than reflective thought. There is probably no psychological analysis which has displayed so much perspicacity, vigour, concentration, and perseverance of mind, as the discovery of the law of gravitation, an achievement of spontaneous research. The spontaneous intelligence, in this acceptation of the term, originates not only the simplest but the subtlest inventions, apprehends not only the most obvious but the most recondite truths, and has produced effects the greatest and most varied, the religion of Zoroaster, the Iliad of Homer, the paintings of Raffaelle, the buildings of Sir Christopher Wren, Laplace's 'Mécanique Céleste,' and Smith's 'Wealth of Nations.' Mental philosophers are rather apt to talk as if the reflection they employed were alone worthy of the name of thought; but when we remember that spontaneity has given birth to industry, art,

religion so far as human, and far the larger portion of science, we may perhaps venture to refer such language to the same sort of egotism which led the ancient poets always to represent, whomsoever they might consign to Tartarus, their brother bards as among the most honoured inhabitants of Elysium.

M. Cousin has not succeeded, then, in distinguishing between spontaneous and reflective intelligence, although there is a real distinction between them on which he has occasionally touched. Had he apprehended it more clearly and consistently, he would have seen that it could not possibly be applied to history in the way he attempted. If reflection be restricted to denote that kind of thought which has its origin in the conviction that processes of mind require explanation no less than processes of matter; and that if the mind will only turn its eye inwards—will only bend its attention back upon itself, and study these processes, an explanation of them may be reached, and if spontaneity be understood as comprehending all other thought, the notion that the whole mass of thought in individuals, nations, and humanity is set in motion and kept in motion by the action of reflection, ceases to be in any degree plausible. Reflection must then be admitted to be a kind of thought, which, instead of setting all other thought in motion, makes its own appearance only when most other kinds of thought have already run a lengthened course, only after notable results have been reached in science, art, morals, and religion. Instead of determining the general movement of thought, it must be determined by it; and instead of imposing a law of movement on spontaneous thought, a law of movement already there must comprehend and regulate its own movement. But this means ruin to M. Cousin's theory; it is the pulling out of its foundation-stone. If true, whatever be the cause of historical movement, that cause cannot be the decomposition of spontaneous thought into its essential elements under the action of reflection; and whatever be the law of historical movement, that law cannot be the inability of reflection to think more than one of these elements at a time, or in any other order than that of infinite, finite, and relation of finite and infinite. Both cause and law must be looked for elsewhere. The attention must no longer be confined to the relation of one

kind of thought to another; but the whole movement of thought must be studied in itself, and in relation to nature.

But may not, it will be said, spontaneous thought, although it move independently of the impulse of reflection, still, in the course of its movement, manifest one of its elements after another, so that each element shall have an epoch to itself after the manner indicated by Cousin? I think not. If spontaneous intelligence develop, and if there are certain elements so essentially constitutive of it as to be included in its every act, it is hard to see how all these elements can fail to be continuously and contemporaneously developed, and especially how they can be so separated as to be the distinctive principles of historical epochs of immense duration. And whether such a successive development of the elements of reason be possible or not, obviously every presumption adduced by M. Cousin in its favour is swept away by the dispersion of the confused argumentation on which he rests it. Any presumptions or probabilities which remain point to the opposite conclusion. Thus the speculative grounds on which Cousin bases his hypothesis of a successive separate development of the elements of intelligence in successive historical epochs are undermined, and it is on these grounds that he has chiefly rested it; indeed it may be said to have been exclusively on these grounds, there being nothing else except a passing assurance that the actual course of history is found to confirm the conclusion which they, according to him, support.

The result now attained might have been reached in another way, which I have not followed, simply because it would have involved me in a very dry and abstract discussion. Nothing can be less satisfactory, I think, than M. Cousin's analysis of thought into the three elements of infinite, finite, and their relation. I can see no truth in his identification of unity, substance, cause, or even the absolute with the infinite, or of multiplicity, phenomenon, effect, or even the conditioned with the finite, or in his reduction of all relations to the least comprehensible of relations.

The ultimate appeal, however, must be to the facts themselves. Now, what do they say? Do they substantiate the notion of three historical epochs, the first characterised by the supremacy

of the infinite, the second of the finite, and the third of the relation of the infinite and finite? To my thinking, they do nothing of the kind. The epoch of the infinite, according to M. Cousin, was that of the East, where everything was more or less immobile, industry feeble, the arts gigantic and monstrous, the laws of the State fixed and immutable, religion a longing after absorption in the invisible, and philosophy the contemplation of absolute unity. Well, was the East in any form in which that description can be regarded as even approximately true, the first epoch of history? Is it possible for us seriously to hold it was? M. Cousin, while believing in a primitive revelation, an age of gold, the Eden of poetry and religion, discarded the question of a primitive people, as more embarrassing than important, and as not properly belonging to history, which, strictly, is only where difference and development are. So be it, since we can afford to make the most generous concessions. But was there no long interval, no time of difference and development, of struggle and evolution, no epoch between Eden and the East described by M. Cousin? Did the latter spring immediately out of the former? There was, we may be certain, a long interval, and no immediate connection, or even sudden growth like that of Jonah's gourd. The East presents us with several elaborate and artificial civilisations, but with none which we have reason to suppose dates from Eden; on the contrary, we have more or less evidence of their having developed gradually from simple, if not barbarous, conditions of society. But rude and simple peoples, still more barbarous peoples, are never found absorbed in the contemplation of the infinite, and of absolute unity. The Brahmins and Budhists of Asia may be so; but we may be assured the low and sensuous populations which the Aryans encountered in India on their arrival were not, and these Aryans themselves—the Vedic hymns show us—were, so far from being at first weighed down with a sense of the infinite, feebly and dimly conscious of any such feeling, while keenly alive to the phases and impressions of nature, and to the interests of a life, healthy, varied, mobile, active, and, in a word, all that, according to M. Cousin, life in the epoch of the infinite should not have been. This is not all. M. Cousin applies his description of the epoch of the infinite to

the East. But the East is a very wide word. Did M. Cousin realise how comprehensive it was? A little inquiry shows us that he did not. His description of the East is to a considerable extent true of India, after the definitive establishment of Brahminism, but of no other Eastern nation; it characterises not very inaccurately a stage of Hindu life, but most unwarrantably professes to be a delineation of the whole life and history of Asia plus Egypt. There is, for instance, no country in Europe to which that description of the East applies *less* than to China. It is true, indeed, that China affords a good example of comparative immobility; but nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that immobility due to the absorption of the Chinese mind in the study of the infinite and the absolute. That mind is exceptionably indifferent and dead to these things, strangely atheistic and materialistic, engrossed in the finite, indefatigable in the pursuit of earthly gains, greedy of sensuous joys. It might readily be shown that M. Cousin's description also fails to answer to the monarchies of Middle Asia and to Egypt; and although it should be granted that the Jewish people was distinguished by its consciousness of the presence of an Infinite and Eternal God and Judge, it must at the same time be maintained that that consciousness elicited instead of crushing the sense of personality, freedom, responsibility; and that it proved itself to be in no wise incompatible with vigour and enterprise. There is yet another difficulty. The epoch of the infinite comes to an end. When? M. Cousin answers: *When the infinite is exhausted in every direction.* And it appears not to have occurred to him that there need be any hesitation in accepting that answer. But surely it is a most mysterious, if not a self-contradictory one, and the very reverse of explanatory. How can the infinite be *exhausted* in *any* direction? and much more, in *every* direction? Is not all such speech a darkening of counsel by words without wisdom?

The epoch of the finite M. Cousin finds in the history of classical antiquity. In describing it, however, he keeps his eye exclusively fixed on Greece; and yet entirely overlooks the obvious difficulty, that if the finite realised itself so admirably in Greece, it should not have reappeared in a less perfect form

in Rome—a difficulty which he could not have got over by saying that in Greece the finite did not impress itself on all the phases of life, and therefore had to continue itself in Rome, because, according to his own teaching, the *last* phase of life on which an idea *can* impress itself is the philosophical; and it is certainly not true that Rome was, and Greece was not, a philosophical nation. In order that the finite should have had all its development, he tells us that it must have had an almost exclusive development, unhindered by any movement of the infinite; and accordingly he describes Greece as having been wholly dominated by the idea of the finite. But he thereby only shows how dangerous is the kind of historical speculation in which he indulges. For the sake of his formula, he has to ignore the plainest teaching of such expressions of Grecian life as the mysteries, metaphysics, and tragedy—has to mutilate the facts, or notice only those which suit the foregone conclusion, seeing that, looked at fairly and fully, they would show Greece to have contributed very greatly to the development of the ideas of the infinite and of the absolute. Greece certainly did not represent the infinite less than China, nor did it even represent the finite more. The superiority of Greece over the East lay, not in carrying the finite farther—which would have been no merit or progress—but in having a truer sense of beauty of form, of proportion, of harmony. Of course finiteness and form are very different things; and a graceful form is no more finite, or suggestive of the finite, than one which is the reverse.

To the modern world—the third epoch—is assigned the task of apprehending and expressing the relation of the infinite and finite. How this can be done, apart from the development of the related ideas, M. Cousin does not show. Neither does he show that the effort to reconcile these two ideas is really distinctive of the modern world. And this for the good reason that such is not the case. It is impossible to study the Hindu philosophies without coming to the conclusion that their object was not the infinite to the exclusion of, but in relation to, the finite; nor the Greek philosophies without similarly discovering that their object was not the finite in itself, but in its connection with the infinite.

Tested, then, by the facts, this distribution of epochs is found to be false. Whatever be the plan of history, it cannot be that drawn by M. Cousin. And there is some comfort in that reflection, seeing that he denies our race a future. There can be, he tells us, no new epoch of history. "Try," he says, "to add a fourth. It is not in the power of thought, I do not say to succeed in it, but even to attempt it; for thought is able to conceive of anything only by reason of the finite, of the infinite, and of their relation." We do not need to take the trouble of trying, having ascertained that the three so-called epochs are mere illusions. Had there, however, I confess, been no other objection to M. Cousin's theory than that it logically involved the dogmatic denial of the possibility of any new epoch of history in the future, I should consider that in itself to outweigh any reasons he has given for it. It is true he tries to break the force of the objection by saying that the present epoch is only emerging from the stage of barbarism; but that assertion is not only unsupported by any appeal to facts, but in manifest contradiction to his account of what determines the completion of an epoch, and to the character which he ascribes to his own philosophy as an all-comprehensive, all-reconciling eclecticism.

M. Cousin, as I have indicated, concludes his exposition of the plan of history by a profession of his faith in historical optimism. "History is the government of God made visible; and hence everything is there in its place: and if everything is there in its place, everything is there for good; for everything arrives at an end, marked by a beneficent power." It is marvellous how our author could fancy he was entitled to believe so great a theory on such a faint appearance of reason. There are things without number which, our intellects and consciences testify, appear to be indubitably out of place, bad, and mischievous. If it can be shown that they are not what they appear to be—not really bad, but really good—let it be done, even although it render inevitable the inference that conscience is an essentially lying faculty; but let us not ignore the facts, or affirm without examination, that they are just the opposite of what they seem, on no better ground than an enthymeme so contemptible as God is good, and therefore everything is good.

The spread of pessimistic theories like those of Schopenhauer and Hartmann, although not a pleasant sign of the times, has probably had at least one good result—the rendering it henceforth impossible for any philosopher to accept optimism on such almost incredibly superficial grounds as satisfied Cousin and Hegel.

There are still three lectures of Cousin to notice, and they treat of places, nations, and great men; because these are the three things by which the spirit of an epoch manifests itself,—the three important points on which the historian ought to fix his attention. As to the first—places, the part of geography in history, which is the subject of the eighth lecture—the substance of M. Cousin's teaching is as follows: Everything in the world has a meaning; nothing is insignificant; and consequently every place necessarily represents an idea,—one of the ideas which underlie and connect all other ideas. The relation of man to nature is not one of effect to cause; but man and nature are two great effects of the same cause, so harmoniously correspondent to each other that, given a country, you may tell what the people will be, or, given a people, what sort of country they must inhabit. No place represents more than one idea. The three great epochs must therefore have three different theatres. If we consider what these must be, we shall be forced to conclude that the theatre of the epoch of the infinite can only be an extensive continent with vast plains and almost impassable mountains, and bordering upon the ocean; that of the finite, countries comparatively small, on the shores of some inland sea; and that of the relation of the finite to the infinite, a continent of considerable size, bordering on the ocean, yet possessing inland seas, sufficiently yet not too compact, and varied in its configuration and climate;—in other words, these theatres must be—for the infinite, Asia; for the finite, Greece and Italy; and for the relation of the finite to the infinite, Europe.

Here I remark, first, although M. Cousin starts with the affirmation that every thing, and consequently every place, in the world, has a meaning, or represents an idea, the result of the survey which he takes of the earth to illustrate that affirma-

tion is, that the greater part of Africa and the whole American continent have no meaning and represent no idea. Perhaps some may be willing to give up Africa; but who will surrender America, which is so emphatically the land of progress and of promise—that which, so far as man may judge, has the mightiest future before it? Two contradictory propositions pervade this extraordinary lecture—the one being, God made every place to represent an idea; and the other, He made only some places to represent ideas,—or, in other words, made some—and notably America—to represent none. Secondly, Although everywhere nature influences man and man nature—although everywhere man conforms his habits to his habitat, and modifies matter to serve his ends—and everywhere the character of a land impresses itself on the intellect, imagination, and feelings of its inhabitants, and so enters, as it were, into their moral being and national life,—it is, nevertheless, great exaggeration to say, as M. Cousin does, "Give me the map of a country—its configuration, its climate, its waters, its winds, its natural productions, its botany, its zoology, and all its physical geography—and I pledge myself to tell you what will be the man of this country, and what place this country will occupy in history." Man has other relations than to nature, and some as important; and to judge of him by that one relationship alone can never lead us to the knowledge of what he is, nor of what his history must be. Thirdly, The way in which M. Cousin conceives of the relation of nature to man is vain and fanciful. It is not as a relation of cause and effect, of action and reaction, of mutual influence, but of effects designed to correspond to each other, of a pre-established harmony like that which Leibnitz supposed to exist between the body and the soul. This notion is not only purely conjectural, but inconsistent with the innumerable facts which manifest that nature does influence man, and that man does modify nature. It is impossible to hold, either in regard to the body and soul, or in regard to nature and man, *both* the theory of mutual influence and of pre-established harmony. All that, in either case, proves the former, disproves the latter. The belief in a pre-established harmony between man and nature is, indeed, considerably more absurd than in a pre-established har-

mony between the body and soul; for when a body is born a soul is in it, which remains in it till death, and is never known to leave it in order to take possession of some other body: but every country is not created with a people in it, nor is every people permanently fixed to a particular country. Imagination may be deceived for a moment by an obvious process of association into this belief of certain peoples being suited for certain lands, independently of the action of natural causes — the Greeks, let us say, for Greece, the Indian for the prairies and forests of America, the Malayan for the islands of the Indian Archipelago; but a moment's thought on the fact that the Turk has settled down where the Greeks used to be, that mighty nations of English-speaking men are rising up where the Indian roamed, and that Dutchmen are thriving in the lands of the Malayan, should suffice to disabuse us. Besides, just as the dictum "Marriages are made in heaven" is seriously discredited by the great number that are badly made, so the kindred opinion that every country gets the people which suits it, and every people the country, as a direct and immediate consequence of their pre-established harmony, is equally discredited by the prevalence of ill-assorted unions, a great many worthless peoples living in magnificent lands, while far better peoples have much worse ones. Do I deny, then, that reason rules the universe, or that God orders all things wisely and well? I hope not; merely a shallow and false conception of that truth. To deny the pre-established harmony of nature and man as taught by Cousin, and, I may add, by Hegel, and to count as puerile what they say about every place and people having an idea, is no more to discard faith in a divine wisdom pervading the universe, than to deny the legitimacy of applying to the interpretation of Scripture the Origenist hypothesis of allegory, or the Swedenborgian principle of correspondence, is an expression of disbelief in the presence of a divine wisdom in the Bible.

The ninth lecture treats of nations. They exist, we are told, to represent ideas comprehended under the general idea of the epoch to which they belong. In order to understand a nation, the philosophy of history must ascertain the idea it is meant to represent; the stage it has reached in the realisation of that idea;

the evolution of the idea in industry, laws, art, religion, and philosophy; and the order of sequence and subordination among these elements. It is only through reaching the truth on all these points that we can escape partial and narrow views. The nations of an epoch necessarily have resemblances greater than their differences since they belong to the same epoch, but necessarily have differences since they have separate or independent existence. Philosophy, seeing that the differences of nations—that is, their particular ideas—are incomplete truths, can look upon them all not only with toleration but with favour; and humanity will be taught to do the same by its own history in the course of ages. Nations themselves, however, cannot fail to regard their particular ideas as absolute and complete truths, entitled to universal and exclusive dominion. Hence the origin of war, which is simply the violent encounter or collision of the particular ideas of different nations. The certain and inevitable result of war is the triumph of the stronger over the weaker idea—of the nation which has its time to serve over that which has served its time. War is necessary and beneficial, because it is the condition and means of progress. A battle is nothing else than the combat of error with truth, and victory nothing else than the triumph of the truth of to-day over the truth of yesterday, which has become the error of to-day. It is a mistake to speak of chance in war—the dice are loaded; humanity loses not a single game; not one battle has taken a turn unfavourable to civilisation. Nor is war only necessary and useful: it is also just. The conquered party always deserves its fate; and the conquering party triumphs because it is better, more provident, wiser, braver, and more meritorious than its foe. War is action on a great scale, and as such the test and measure of a nation's worth. In the military history and military organisation of a people its whole spirit and character may be studied.

Such is M. Cousin's celebrated theory of nations, and the still more celebrated doctrine of war which he deduced from it. Both seem to me very inadequate, very false. As to the nature of nations, the important preliminary investigation as to what a nation is not, is altogether omitted, and (partly in consequence

thereof) there is no investigation into, or description of, the conditions and characteristics of national existence. M. Cousin, simply for an *a priori* dogmatic reason, differentiates nations by their supposed final causes, the purposes for which he imagines them to have received existence, telling us that there are different nations because there are different ideas; that each nation represents one idea and not another; and that that idea represents for that nation the whole truth. This kind of thought is not only badly expressed but essentially false. Every scientifically disciplined mind, I think, will recognise that it proceeds upon an illegitimate use of the principle of final causes. Besides, it is no excellence in a nation to be dominated by a single idea, and no nation seems to have been meant to realise only a single idea. A monomaniac nation must be a still more lamentable sight than a monomaniac man. Instead of the apprehension of one idea and the application of one idea being that for which nations exist, it is the very thing they need to be most on their guard against. They are all prone to be one-idea'd and one-sided. The characters which the circumstances, physical and historical, in which nations are placed in the earlier stages of their existence tend to form are narrow and defective characters, their ends very definite and distinctive, but also very low and selfish ends; and nations have only to isolate themselves from one another, and yield each to its own exclusive tendencies, and concentrate itself on its favourite aim and private good, and they will undoubtedly soon represent and realise only one idea. But that is just what nations should not do. It was because the nations of antiquity thus isolated and narrowed themselves, that they ceased to serve an end in the world and passed away. It is because such isolation is not to anything like the same extent the law, or such selfishness the motive principle, of modern nations, that we see reasons of hope that they may never cease to promote noble ends and never require to pass away. One-idea'dness, one-sidedness, is shown most explicitly by all history to be full of danger; a thing which nations ought to strive strenuously to be delivered from, and in working against which they are certainly not resisting the providential law which rules over their destinies.

The doctrine of war which M. Cousin has appended to his theory of nations is false, and fraught with moral dangers; precisely the teaching of the most worthless of the old Greek sophists, that nature's right is might, and justice the advantage of the stronger; directly borrowed from Hegel, who was not unfrequently a sophist, and only too true a representative of the worst side of German character, its servile worship of power and want of sympathy with the weak. It might have been thought that such a doctrine would have found no lodgment in French hearts, which are so singularly the reverse of either servile or ungenerous; but the love of false glory and a blind faith in French superiority supplied it with a soil even there, so that it has flourished rank and poisonous far beyond the limits of the doctrinaire school. But one may trust that now that Frenchmen have seen this sophism of Hegel realised in the Blut und Eisen of Bismark, they at least will have henceforth done with it; and that they will seek in a doctrine more consonant to the better instincts of their natures the inspiration which will ultimately enable them to put to shame all who believe that might is right.

War, according to M. Cousin, is the violent concussion of the particular ideas of different nations, and is caused by nations regarding their particular ideas as complete truths, instead of what they really are—incomplete truths. This account of the origin of war is scarcely plausible, and not at all true. Try to apply it, and its inadequacy immediately becomes obvious. M. Cousin did not venture to make the attempt. Had it been true, he would have been able to point out what were the particular ideas of different nations living in the same epoch, and how these ideas were what made these nations rush violently against each other; what particular apprehensions of the relation of the infinite to the finite, for example, have been peculiar to England, France, and Germany, and how they have made them fight so much with one another, and with so many other nations: but he was not able, because it was not true; because it has not been the particular ideas of different nations, nor even the particular characters of different nations, which have made them go to war, but certain evil passions common to all nations, common

to all men. That the French nation has one character and represents one idea, and the German nation has another character and represents another idea, no more accounts for the wars they have waged against each other, than that men have another character and represent another idea than women, necessitates war between men and women. The true causes of war are those so well described by Hobbes,—competition, distrust, and glory —or, in other terms, greed, jealousy, and ambition, making men invade for gain, for safety, and for reputation. The words of deepest and most condensed wisdom ever written on the subject of war are those of St James: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not."

The primary cause of war is never anything so excellent as even imperfect truth, is never even the humblest form of good, but always evil, some evil lust. War is murder on a gigantic scale; and the true authors of it are, he who was a murderer from the beginning, and men, so far as they yield to his inspirations—those selfish and hateful passions of avarice, envy, ambition, and pride, out of which murder issues. This is not to say that war either can or ought always to be avoided. On the contrary; the devil should be resisted, evil opposed, despotisms overthrown, mutinies quelled, invasions driven back, the oppressed liberated, might violating right punished by the sword if nothing else will do—by the sword, taken up as a last sad necessity, to be cast down with joy as soon as its harsh work is over. But although men, although nations, may have to go to war for the sake of truth, justice, or mercy, it is never these things that are the real causes of war, but their opposites—the evil lusts which have produced their opposites, those wrongs that must be righted. It follows that those who argue that war is just because it is necessary, reason badly. Strictly or philosophically speaking, war is not necessary any more than injustice is necessary; popularly speaking, or as a matter of fact, it is necessary, but only because of the existence of injustice. It is not necessary in any sense incompatible with injustice on

both sides, and is only necessary in a sense which involves injustice on one side.

The notion that the inevitable result of war is the triumph of truth—that civilisation gains by every battle—is simply the revival and extension of the medieval superstition which originated the judicial duel; people in that age ignorantly supposing that if the justice of heaven were thus directly appealed to, it would infallibly declare itself in the vindication of the innocent and punishment of the guilty. There is no more reason for believing that in a duel of nations the one which has most truth and justice on its side will conquer, than that in a duel of persons the good man will overcome the bad. Since wicked Cain killed righteous Abel, history has supplied unbroken testimony to the possibility of the innocent suffering, even to the loss of life. The Romans succeeded less easily in their just than in their unjust wars, sustaining many serious defeats in the former and very few in the latter. No amount of truth or justice could have prevented Poland from being partitioned or Denmark from being despoiled.

So far from civilisation gaining by every battle, a main cause of numerous tribes of men being still uncivilised has been their constant warring against one another. Civilisation surely suffered from the wars which laid Italy beneath the feet of Spanish, French, and German invaders. Was Germany the better of the Thirty Years' War? Did the victories of Napoleon contribute greatly to spread the truths of the Revolution, or truth of any kind? Has his influence not been on the whole baneful, and especially so to France? Further, although every war may have been followed by some good, and many wars by much good, that good may have been only seldom, and in a small degree, the direct or proper effect of the antecedent war. And, in fact, the only good which can directly and truly result from war is the redress of some wrong, the punishment of some injustice. All other advantages—all that really does much for civilisation—must follow, not from war itself, but from things associated with it; so that war is not the cause but the occasion thereof—an evil overruled to produce good, as any evil, whether pain or sin, may be overruled to do. Thus the greater part of

the good which can be shown to have some connection with war cannot be shown to have any causal connection with it, says nothing for the goodness of war, and is no justification of the men who engage in it, although it speaks loudly for the goodness of God, and for the wisdom and justice of His providence.

M. Cousin's views on war suggest several other remarks; but I must content myself with indicating how fallacious is the argument that war is always just, because the party which is defeated always deserves to lose, and the party which conquers to gain. I utterly deny the truth of the assumptions on which that reasoning rests—that a nation which cannot defend its existence must needs be corrupt, degraded, unworthy to exist, and that a nation must be superior in virtue to every neighbour which it can conquer in war. I deny even that virtue necessarily tends to victory, or vice to defeat. I see no reason at all to doubt that honesty may stand in the way of a nation's seizing wealth and power; and I am quite certain that many nations have grown strong by deceit, by violence, by abominable means. The man who knows the histories of Rome, of France, of England, of Prussia, and yet denies this, must be morally blind; or rather his moral vision must be so utterly false and perverted that he takes evil for good and good for evil. It is not merely foresight and self-denial which will help a nation to become a great military power: revenge and greed, a servile spirit in its masses, and ambition and lust of rule in its nobles, will help also. I deny not that justice will carry it over injustice in the end, the good cause triumphing in some future age, although perhaps a very distant one, and the good man in a better world; I deny not that there are in virtue higher possibilities even for war than in vice;—but more than this I do deny, and especially that the conquerors in war are necessarily more meritorious than the conquered. And should, on this account, any follower of Cousin, Hegel, Carlyle, or another, object,—then you accuse not the vanquisher, but that which has given the victory to the vanquisher—Providence,—what other answer does he deserve than Milton's question, "Do you take God for blind?" However much a man may denounce shams, in supposing that outward success, victories, triumphal processions, and the like, are

God's rewards of righteousness, he shows that belief in shams—the taking of the seeming for the real, the illusory for the true—is the substance of his creed, and a thorough mistaking of the character of God, the root of it. But grant that the conqueror is always better than the conquered, a strong nation than a weak, and what sort of reasoning is it even then to infer that therefore war is always just? By what rules of reasoning is *that* conclusion drawn? Or is it not rather by rules of unreason, which would quickly lead a man to a bad end even in this world of very imperfect justice? Are the good incapable of doing wrong? Is appropriation no theft, and killing no murder, if only it be the worse who suffer at the hands of the better? *That* a vindication of the morality of victory? Why, it is its *reductio ad absurdum;* and no more need be said.

In the tenth lecture M. Cousin theorises on great men, and reaches the following results: First, The great man is not an arbitrary or contingent existence—not a creature which may or may not be—but the representative, more or less accomplished, which every great nation necessarily produces. Second, The great man, like everything truly sublime and beautiful, combines universality with individuality. He represents the general spirit of his nation and times,—this is the stuff of which he is made, what unites him with all, and enables him to influence and dominate all; but he represents it under the finite and particular form of his own person or individuality; so that the particular and the general, the original and the ordinary, the finite and the infinite, mingle in him in that measure and harmony which is true human greatness. Third, Great men so sum up nations, epochs, and humanity, that universal history is but their united biographies. Fourth, The great man comes to represent an idea so long as it has force and is worth the representing—not before and not after; is born and dies at the proper time; and feels himself more or less the instrument of a power which is not his own, of an irresistible force, of destiny. Fifth, The sign of a great man is great success; and from great success results first great power, and next great glory—things which are never awarded to those who have not merited them. Sixth, A great man is great, and he is a man. What makes

him great is his relation to the spirit of his times and to his people; and this alone properly belongs to history, which is bound to pass over what is merely individual and temporary, and to attach itself to what is great and permanent, what has made a man historical, and given him power and glory. What makes him a man is his individuality; and this may be small, vicious, almost contemptible, but should be abandoned to biography. Seventh, The epoch of the infinite, where the absolute reigned to the suppression of individuality and liberty, was unfavourable to the development of great men; the epoch of the finite so especially favourable, that it may be called the heroic age of humanity; and the epoch of the relation of the finite with the infinite produces them in equal abundance, but less distinct and brilliant. Eighth, and last, Industry is the sphere of life least favourable to the manifestation of great men; war and philosophy are the spheres most favourable: because the two chief modes of serving humanity are, to cause it to advance a step in the path of truth, by elevating the ideas of an age to their highest expression, or by impressing these ideas on the world by the sword, and by making for them extensive conquests.

I have compressed a very able, very eloquent lecture into these eight propositions, in order to be able to indicate in the briefest possible way how far the theory therein contained seems to need correction. Proposition the first, then, may be true, but it has not been proved true. It might be proved true in two ways, and only two,—viz., by showing that *all* existence is necessary—or, in other words, that there is no such thing as contingency or freedom; or by discovering some necessary law which determines the appearance and disappearance of great men. M. Cousin does neither, and no one, in fact, has yet succeeded in either. Necessitarianism has still libertarianism strong and defiant in front of it. The necessary law of the coming and going of great men, if there be such a law, is still to seek; and I know of no step having been taken which promises to lead to the finding of it. Was there any other law for the birth of Luther than for those of his father and mother, the miner of Mohra and his wife? Who can tell why a great man has been

born here and not elsewhere, at one moment of time and no other? Why one generation has been favoured with a crowd of great men, and other generations refused one in seasons of greatest need? In every great nation great men have been produced; but that the great nations have necessarily produced them is what our profound ignorance of the conditions of their production should prevent us from asserting. On this point, these words of Mr Carlyle seem to me admirable. "He (the great man) was the 'creature of the Time,' they (our critics) say; the Time called him forth, the Time did everything, he nothing, but what we the little critic could have done too! This seems to me but melancholy work. The Time call forth? Alas! we have known Times call loudly enough for their great man; but not find him when they called! He was not there; Providence had not sent him; the Time, *calling* its loudest, had to go down to confusion and wreck because he would not come when called."

The second proposition may be regarded as M. Cousin's definition of the nature of the great man. It contains most important truth; above all, it gives due prominence to this truth, that a man cannot be really great merely by some single aptitude or ability, by what is isolating and distinctive, but by greatness of nature as a whole, greatness of mind, greatness of heart, so that the roots of his being strike deeper and wider into the life of his nation and time and humanity itself, than those of other men. But I cannot say it expresses truth only; on the contrary, it seems to me a serious error to represent generality and individuality as two things which are combined or mingled in the great man, to maintain that he is great by the one and a man by the other; and so to separate the greatness from the man and the man from the greatness. The greatness of the great man is not an element, but a predicate of him—a predicate of him as a man, an individual, a whole human being. One sees the consequence of this error of M. Cousin in proposition the sixth, which I venture to account in the main false. There ought to be no such distinction between history and biography as that which is there drawn; the meannesses of great men cannot be so separated from their greatness; on the contrary, their every meanness is

a deduction from their greatness; their vices are as historical as their virtues; some of them have been as great—or greater—for evil as for good. The right of every man to be judged fairly, charitably, not by single acts and features, and especially not by single faults and failures, but by his character and works in their entirety, is enough for the greatest man; and those who, like Hegel, like Carlyle, like Cousin, claim for the great man more than this—as that he shall be judged by another standard than his fellow-men, that his greatness shall be counted goodness, that his strength shall be held to be its own law, that his sins against humanity shall be blotted out from the page of history, and only what redounds to his glory recorded—simply advise us to falsify history, to delude ourselves, to set up idols and worship them; and when, going farther, they sneer at those who reject their advice as "small critics," or "psychological pedagogues," or "valet-souls, incapable of recognising the worth of a hero," they forget that these names must fall with little weight from them, so long as for criticism and pedagogy they would substitute the abnegation of reason and conscience, and especially so long as they themselves teach the valets' creed, that belief in power and consequent disbelief in the primacy of right which make a mean soul. By such a creed no man ever has been or will be helped to be heroic. Any one who knows how much mischief a history written on this theory may do, or even —witness Thiers' 'Consulate and Empire'—has already done, will excuse the warmth of my words.

I regard the third proposition, which will be recognised as the expression of almost the entire positive substance of Mr Carlyle's philosophy of history, as also in the main untrue. There is the valuable truth in it, that general causes, as they are called, are not omnipotent, not independent of individual intelligences and wills, or irresistible over them; that these latter have spheres of action of their own, and when powerful, wide spheres of action; but everything more which it contains is exaggeration and error. The greatest man's work is but an addition to the sum of work done by his fellow-men, and in no respect the sum itself. Great men are in no special way representative men—nay, the completest representative men are invariably

mediocre men. The great man depends on others just as they depend on him; improves and develops what others have done, and leaves his own work to be in the same way improved and developed by others. Newton was perhaps the greatest man who has appeared in the history of mathematical and physical science; and it may be, as Mr Mill thinks, "that if Newton had not lived, the world must have waited for the Newtonian philosophy until there had been another Newton or his equivalent;" but a long succession of far lesser men have followed him and added to what he did, as a long series of labourers preceded him whose results made his possible. It is by no means so certain that some succession or combination of eminent men might not in the lifetime of the first or second generation after Newton have found out the law of gravitation without his help, as it is that Newton himself, with the whole thought and theory of his great discovery in his head, had to wait for sixteen years, unable to accomplish its proof, till Picard, by correctly measuring an arc of the meridian, gave him the true length of the earth's radius, a necessary element in his reasoning. I readily grant, however, that a great man may accomplish what no combination of lesser men, not even the united efforts of the whole human race besides, can effect; but then, on the other hand, a small combination of men far from great, may equally be able to accomplish what he cannot. The work which an age has given it to do may only be achievable under the guidance of a great man; and yet more work may be allotted to be done, and actually be done, by an age of merely ordinary men. The age of Voltaire was, so far as I can judge, not an age of great men, but certainly it accomplished work both for good and evil, in a measure equalled by few other ages in the world's history. In a word, those who vindicate for great men a place, and even a large place, in history, defend the interests of truth; but those who represent history as only their united biographies or the connected series of their actions, only resuscitate an old error which died and was buried long ago,—that narrow, superficial, and false notion which caused a justly forgotten race of authors to suppose the history of nations was merely the history of their kings and nobles.

The fourth proposition into which I have condensed M. Cousin's doctrine of great men asserts that they are born and die at the proper time, but no criterion is given of what is the proper time. It is, consequently, so far a vague unverified assertion. And when it adds that the great man is always more or less of a fatalist, it passes into positive error. Fatalism may be an article of a great man's creed, an element of his faith, but nevertheless is a weakness, and no sign of greatness. In so far as a man is possessed by a blind feeling of being an instrument of destiny, used by an irresistible force he knows not to what end, instead of being rationally conscious of having a mission to accomplish, a worthy work to do, he is a man whose claims to leadership ought to be distrusted. There have been two men in the present century who have demanded to be received as political Messiahs on this ground of being "men of destiny," Napoleon I. and Napoleon III., one of them undoubtedly a very great man, the other not an ordinary man; and have not both, like blind men leading the blind, led those who followed them into the ditch? Fortune, fate, one's star,—belief in these things may have characterised Wallenstein, Napoleon, and many other great men as well as small; but certainly not all great men, and not the greatest of great men, the wisest and best among them.

The fifth proposition contains probably the most dangerous error of any in the whole theory, and, at the same time, truth enough to give it plausibility. A great man must certainly be a man who can do great things; the greatness of his work, all hindrances duly taken into account, must be the truest sign of the greatness of his character. But success is another matter. The greatest man may be sent into the world either too soon or too late to succeed; "the noble army of the martyrs" has numbered in its ranks the wisest and bravest, the greatest and most heroic of our race; and even He who was the perfect type of greatness and the author of the greatest thing on earth, had no success in the sense meant, and founded His work on a death not of glory but of shame. "Give me an instance," says M. Cousin, "of unmerited glory;" as if times without number the cry of, "Not this man, but Barabbas," had not ascended from the earth, absolving the vile and criminal, and dooming to death

the hero and the saint; and again, "whoever does not succeed is of no use in the world, leaves no great result, and passes away as if he had never been," as if there had not been many sad defeats worth far more than many brilliant triumphs, and as if the blood of a Polycarp and a Huss, an Arnold of Brescia and a Savonarola, and all the host of those who have died for faith, for science, for freedom, for country, had been shed in vain because shed for a good afar off, and not for that glory which our author tells us is "almost always contemporaneous with a great action, and never far distant from a great man's tomb." M. Cousin speaks in a higher and truer strain when he says, "We should despise reputation, the success of a day and the trifling means that lead to it. We should think of doing, doing much, doing well—of being, and not appearing; for it is an infallible rule, that all which appears without being, soon disappears; but all which exists, by virtue of its nature, sooner or later must appear." But that is not only inconsistent with the tenor of all that goes before it and follows after it in the lecture under consideration, but is still merely partially true, dubious, incapable of verification. Evil is no empty appearance, but a strong reality which can struggle with good on not unequal terms; which has conquered good almost or altogether as often as it has been conquered by it; and which equally with good has powers and laws by which it grows and spreads. There are lies and vices dating from the first man, which are as strong to-day as ever they were, as flourishing as anything to be seen in this world; and hence I fear that those who tell us these things are unreal, mere appearances, which must soon vanish away, are confident as to the future only from having failed to look at the facts of the past and to study the powers of the present.

Of the sixth proposition I have already said enough, and the seventh must be discarded with the division of the course of history on which it depends. The last proposition suggests a question which M. Cousin should not have overlooked: Is there any standard by which we can compare the great men of different spheres of life, the poet and the mechanical inventor, the founder of a religion and the conqueror, the painter or mu-

sician, and the mathematician or philosopher,—and if so, what is it? How are we to measure the relative magnitudes of Aristotle, Cæsar, Raffaelle, Luther, Shakespeare, and Newton? Individual preference is obviously worth little, as each individual is more able to appreciate some excellences than others, and, by constitution and habits, prone to overestimate certain merits and to underestimate others; popular opinion is obviously worth little more, based as it invariably is on a hearsay and superficial acquaintance with facts: and even were both far more reliable than they are, it could only be through their conforming to a standard, a real or objective rule of measurement. Till that is discovered, therefore,—and it is not likely to be easily discovered,—all discussion as to which sphere of life has been adorned with the greatest men must be fruitless, and all decisions in favour of one over another arbitrary and premature.

II.

Before passing to the consideration of what has been attempted and achieved by M. Guizot, it is necessary to mention that a singularly ingenious and elevated thinker, who shared many of M. Cousin's ideas, and is usually, although perhaps rather inaccurately, spoken of as his disciple—M. Theodore Jouffroy (1796-1842)—repeatedly touched the subject of historical philosophy with all his natural superiority of thought and style. In the first series of his 'Mélanges Philosophiques' (1833) he has brought together, under the heading of "Philosophie de l'Histoire," the following essays, which had for the most part appeared in the 'Globe' from 1825 to 1827: 1. How dogmas come to an end; 2. The Sorbonne and the philosophers; 3. Reflections on the philosophy of history; 4. Bossuet, Vico, and Herder; 5. The part of Greece in the development of humanity; 6. The present state of humanity. All these essays are attractive and suggestive reading; but only the third and sixth are of a sufficiently general nature to warrant our giving an account of them.

Here is a summary of the Reflections: The great difference

between man and the other animals is, that while their condition remains from age to age the same, his is continually changing. History is the record of these changes, and the philosophy of history is the investigation of their cause and law. Now human mobility cannot have its principle in the outward world, which acts on the brutes not less than on man, and besides, changes not—nor in the animal instincts and passions, which are the same in all lands and ages; but in that which is essentially changeable in the constitution of man—the ideas of his intelligence. The changes which take place among ideas originate all other changes which take place in the condition of man—or, in other words, all the changes of history; so that the sole object of history is to trace the development of human intelligence, as it is manifested by the outward changes which it at different epochs produces. But as ideas, which are invisible, can only be inferred from facts which are visible, history, to accomplish its single aim, must solve these three problems: 1°, What has been the visible form of humanity from the beginning to the present time? 2°, What has been the development of the ideas of humanity from the beginning to the present time? and, 3°, How these two developments have corresponded—how the development of ideas has produced the development of the visible form of humanity from the beginning to the present time. The majority of historians have confined their attention to the facts, and frequently to the least important classes of facts. The authors who introduced the history of manners and institutions into general history accomplished a revolution, but did not, as was at first supposed, get to the root of the matter, the cause of these causes being now seen to be the succession of ideas. A time may be anticipated when this also will be regarded as a secondary and subordinate cause, and valued chiefly as leading to the discovery of the fixed and immutable law of the succession. That reached, history will lose its independent existence, and be resolved into science; but the day is obviously distant, since even the events, institutions, religions, and manners of different epochs and countries are imperfectly known, and their immediate cause—the succession of ideas—far more imperfectly still. To ascertain the development of

ideas is, and will long be, the grand desideratum. And in the individual, society, and humanity, there is a twofold movement of intelligence—the natural or spontaneous, and the voluntary or reflective—the former regulative of common thought, and the latter of philosophical thought. The reflective movement is always in advance of the spontaneous movement, the few who deliberately seek truth necessarily finding it sooner than the many who do not. Both movements proceed towards the same end and in obedience to the same law, but differing in velocity, and yet acting on each other—the more rapid accelerates the slower, and the slower retards the more rapid; so that the velocity of the development of humanity is the resultant of the unequal velocities of these two movements. This combination of movements in the generation and succession of ideas, and in the transformation of ideas into laws, institutions, and manners, is a beneficent necessity, since, if the movement of the masses retards that of the philosophers, it also renders it more certain and fruitful, prevents mistakes, and secures correctness. The great question whether the movement of humanity is necessary or not, can only be determined by a consideration of the two elements or principles which enter into the production of all human events—the passions of human nature and the ideas of human intelligence. If reason always ruled in an individual we could foresee his conduct; that we so often cannot foresee it is because we cannot divine how far he will listen to passion, and because passion is so variable and capricious in its working that its movements cannot be calculated. Passion has, however, less influence, and reason more, on the conduct of peoples than of individuals. The passions of individuals in a community neutralise one another by their opposition; and so leave the general ideas, on which all are agreed, to rule with comparatively little resistance. Hence the conduct of peoples is far more conformed to their ideas than the conduct of individuals, and can far more easily be foreseen; hence, also, the ease and accuracy with which the conduct of nations can be calculated are in proportion to their freedom and self-government, since the greater the influence of public opinion in a nation, and the less the direction of the nation depends on the will of certain

individuals, the greater is the ascendancy of ideas, which conform to law and logic, and the less the ascendancy of the passions, which contravene law and are contrary to logic. "But, in every case, the influence of individual passions can reach only events of a secondary and transient importance. Great events are always beyond it; for nothing great, nothing permanent, can ever be produced among a people, whatever be its government, except by the force and with the support of the convictions of that people. All that the passions of individuals can attempt and accomplish in opposition to these convictions is speedily swept away. No despot, no favourite, no man of genius, may neglect these convictions in his enterprises and institutions; nay more, no one can be a successful despot or a great statesman except by obeying them. In fine, passion acts only on the surface of the history of nations, while the foundation is in ideas." It is unwarrantable, then, to explain everything in history by the inevitable development of ideas, as some moderns do, but still more unwarrantable to explain everything by individual characters and passions, like the ancients;—the truth lies between these two extremes. The passions of individuals, however, really exerted a greater power in ancient than they do in modern times. The necessary progress of intelligence is what Bossuet called Providence, and what others call destiny, or the force of things. Bossuet's word is good, but not in the sense of an actual interposition of God, who acts with regard to humanity, no less than with regard to the heavenly bodies, through fixed and certain laws, although He acts differently, since the laws which determine the development of humanity presuppose reason and liberty, and operate through them. Further, the movement of humanity is not in a circle, like that of the stars, but progressive. The sentiments of an age as to the Good, Beautiful, and True, are expressed with greatest vividness by the poets. True poets are always the children of their age. It is the mission of philosophers to comprehend their age, to advance before it, and to prepare the future; and a few of them have risen to so lofty a point of view, and seen so much of the course to be traversed by man through time, as to have become intelligible only after ages of progress.

The abstract which I have now given of M. Jouffroy's essay is, I hope, faithful; but, of course, it conveys little, if any, idea of the beauty of the original—of its perspicuity, ease, and elevation—even although drawn up, as far as possible, in the language of the author. As a work of art, M. Jouffroy's essay is almost perfect. And the thoughts which it conveys are, in general, both true and important, well worthy of the beautiful expression which they have received. At the same time, they are far too general, and, so to speak, external, to constitute a philosophy of history. They are simply what they profess to be—"reflections on the philosophy of history,"—nothing more.

Regarded as such, there is only one point on which I feel compelled to take decided objection to them. M. Jouffroy adopted M. Cousin's division of intelligence into spontaneous and reflective, without improvement or modification; and hence all that I have said on this subject with respect to M. Cousin is equally applicable with respect to M. Jouffroy. The two sections of his essay which he devotes to the exposition of the distinction appear to me confused and inaccurate in the extreme. All that he says of spontaneous intelligence proceeds on the absurd and self-contradictory supposition of its being "blind and involuntary." Almost all that he says of reflective intelligence is true only if it be no separate mode of intelligence, as it is described to be, but only an extension of spontaneous intelligence. Thus M. Jouffroy insists that reflective intelligence is always in advance of spontaneous intelligence in the discovery of truth; whereas, in the only sense in which reflection can be with any propriety described as a distinct mode of thought, it never is, and never can be, in advance of spontaneous thought, since that thought is its object.

On another point M. Jouffroy appears to me to have expressed himself too absolutely. It is a very important truth, when properly understood, that the principle of the mobility of human things is in the mobility of the ideas of human intelligence; but an adequate comprehension of it will, I believe, lead us to guard and qualify it, and not to affirm, with M. Jouffroy, that the whole of history is, in the last analysis, only the history of ideas. Feelings presuppose ideas—they cannot

operate without ideas; it does not follow that they have no real existence, that they can be resolved into ideas, or even that they are less powerful factors of history than ideas. The development of intelligence is of primary importance in the philosophical study of history, not because intelligence is the only, or even the most powerful, element in history, but because it holds such a position in the human mind that all other principles are dependent on it, and can only be studied as dependent on it. The dependence of the emotional principles of human nature on the intellectual, however, is not due to their inferior power, but to the character of their power—the need which they have, owing to their blindness as mere impulses, of the enlightenment and guidance which intellect alone can supply.

The title, 'De l'État Actuel de l'Humanité,' is an inadequate and inaccurate designation for an essay which is, in reality, an attempt to forecast the future of our race. The author glances over the world of humanity, and sees it divided into two very unequal portions, barbarous tribes and civilised nations. History, he thinks, warrants him at once to conclude that the former are destined to become civilised; and he asks, Will this be through a new system of civilisation, arising from the bosom of barbarism, or through the triumph of the already existing systems of civilisation over barbarism? He finds in the progressive advance of our present civilisation—the gradual diminution of barbarism — the relatively small number of savages—their division into feeble and unconnected portions—and the neighbourhood and pressure of civilised peoples, more powerful and active,—so many obvious proofs that the number of systems of civilisation is finally settled, and that it is the destiny of the savage portion of humanity to be amalgamated with the civilised masses already formed. He surveys these masses and discovers that they fall into three groups, or belong to three different systems of civilisation, based on three different religions or philosophies, the Christian, the Mohammedan, and the Brahminic. The radical difference between savages and civilised nations is that the former have only crude and vague ideas on the great questions which interest humanity, while the latter have complete and coherent religions, which involve not

only a certain mode of worship, but an entire system of civilisation, bearing to the religion the relation of effect to cause. M. Jouffroy then compares the three systems, and finds that Christianity alone is at present endowed with expansive life,—with the twofold zeal of improvement and proselytism; that while the Christian system is making progress, and the nations which compose it are daily becoming more united and powerful, Mohammedanism and Brahminism make no conquests, resist the invasion of Christianity chiefly by their inertia, sap the strength of the nations which receive them, and, in a word, manifest all the symptoms of decay. Hence, he concludes that, if the Christian system of civilisation be not destroyed by internal defects, it will gain possession of the world,—that its future involves the future of the world. Then, looking more closely at the movement of Christian civilisation, he seems to himself to see that it is led by three nations, France, England, and Germany; all other nations imitating what is already realised in these, while they, although finding much to imitate in each other, have yet in certain respects reached a height from which they can make further advances only by invention. Each of these nations has a special faculty in which it excels, each has its peculiar employment in the work of civilisation, but the distribution of their gifts is for the good of the world, their labours tend towards a common and beneficent end, and there exists between them an involuntary alliance, truly majestic and holy, having for object the progress of humanity. Germany is the learned nation, distinguished by patience of intellect, accumulating with a laborious curiosity and prodigious memory all the facts of history and science, and thus supplying the raw materials of ideas. France is the philosophical nation, distinguished by clearness of understanding, by the power of drawing from facts what is general and suitable in them with accuracy, order, and acumen—in a word, of forming ideas into shape and rendering them popular. England is the practical nation, distinguished by public spirit, industry, and the excellence of her institutions, and having for task the application of ideas to the concerns of life. The true statesman in each of these nations should look beyond the good of his own country,

the worn-out end of its aggrandisement and the abasement of its neighbours, to the advantage of the union of Europe, and of the civilisation of the world by the union and the ideas of Europe. "The politics of our day should look not to the balance of Europe, but to the future of humanity. The civil wars of Europe are ended; the rivalship of the peoples which compose it is about to cease, as the rivalship of the cities of Greece ceased under the sway of Alexander, as the diversities of the provinces of France disappeared under the unity of the monarchy."

It would be most unreasonable to object to the speculations of which a summary has now been given that they are merely general—that they involve no conclusions as to particular contingencies, no predictions of particular occurrences. In carefully refraining from all such, M. Jouffroy has shown his wisdom, his knowledge of the limits within which historical prevision is possible. The science of history, whatever it may in the future become, is as yet very far from being an exact science like astronomy. It furnishes us with no means of calculating the courses of nations with precision and definiteness like the courses of the stars, of foretelling that at this or that period of future time a nation will do this or that action, as we can foretell that at a certain date a star will arrive at a certain point. To forecast, through reasoning on the general tendencies of nations, the general character and direction of their future movements, is the utmost that can be accomplished, and even that cannot be done without difficulty, and without considerable probability of error. It seems to me that M. Jouffroy, notwithstanding the caution of procedure which has been noted, notwithstanding his clearness of intellect, his incontestable mental superiority, has not entirely escaped error.

The inference that what remains of barbarism cannot give rise to any great and independent religion or philosophy, nor, consequently, to any great and independent civilisation, appears irrefragable. The inference that the Christian system is—even looking exclusively to historical considerations—incomparably superior to the Brahminical and Mohammedan systems in all the elements of life and power, and must conquer and destroy them

if the struggle be sufficiently prolonged, appears equally obvious and certain, although the number of adherents of Brahminism and the extent and possibilities of Mohammedan proselytism may have been understated. But it is not legitimate to identify, as M. Jouffroy has virtually done, the conditional conclusion that the Christian system will gain possession of the world if not destroyed by internal defects, with the positive and unconditional conclusion that the Christian system will gain possession of the world. The former conclusion is alone proved by M. Jouffroy, and because it is proved the latter is falsely supposed to be proved. In order to reach the latter conclusion, in order to make out the probability of the Christian system destroying every other and becoming universal, it was incumbent on our author to show that the hypothesis contained in the former conclusion might be rejected, that there was no probability of the Christian system perishing through internal defects. The neglect to attempt that was a serious, if not fatal, omission. It is precisely at that point that all European thinkers who doubt or deny that the future will belong to Christianity diverge and differ from those who believe and affirm it. They do not imagine that the Christian system will be overcome by Mohammedanism or Brahminism, but they pretend that it is a combination of truth and error, that it has defects as well as merits, and must eventually give place to a more complete and determinate system of solutions to the problems which interest humanity. They look especially to science, which has in recent times made such wonderful and rapid progress in so many directions, to bring forth a general doctrine capable of supplying all the wants and guiding all the activities of man in a more satisfactory way than any religion. The aim of M. Jouffroy's argument required him to prove such hope an illusion, and to convict those who indulge in it of turning away from the highest and most comprehensive truth to one lower and narrower, from the ultimate and complete to a derivative and partial good. This requirement he has failed to fulfil,—has failed even to see that it existed.

I must, further, express dissent from that portion of M. Jouffroy's speculations which concern the relation of England,

France, and Germany to humanity and its future. Although his views on that subject are the reflections of a just and generous nature, include some important truths, and are very generally entertained, they are, as a whole, not true, and it is most undesirable that they should longer continue to be received so implicitly and widely as they are. That England, France, and Germany are, if all things be taken into account, at the head of European civilisation, is doubtless true; and that each excels the other two in some respects, and is inferior in others, is likewise true: but there is a wide interval between the first of these truths and the assumption that the nations mentioned will retain in the future the same rank relatively either to each other or to other nations which they occupy at present; and a wide interval also between the second truth and the assumption that their excellences and defects are due to the presence or absence of special faculties which mark out for them their proper and peculiar employment in the work of human progress.

What guarantee is there that England, France, and Germany will long retain their present relative positions? What certainty is there for any one of them, that a hundred years hence it will be in the first rank of nations? What probability is there that no other nation will have reached an equal height? Italy, so far behind them when M. Jouffroy wrote, is already nearly on a line with them, being probably, of all the nations of Europe, that which has made, in the present generation, the greatest progress of a truly satisfactory kind; and this, in the main, not through following or imitating any foreign state, but by advancing along a path of her own, by the development of her own proper life. We have but to recall the names of Manzoni, Pellico, Niccolini, Giusti, and Balbo, of Rosmini, Gioberti, and Mamiani, of Cavour and D'Azeglio, of Manin, Mazzini, and Garibaldi, and of the other noble men whom Italy has recently produced with such wonderful profusion, to convince ourselves that she has been during the last thirty years, in one respect at least, first among the nations—viz., in the intensity of her desire to impress the image of her own national individuality alike on her philosophical speculations, her works of art and literature, and her political action. And why should Italy not advance as

far on her way as England, France, or Germany on theirs? For peace and war, for adventure by land and sea, for science and art, prose and poetry, political subtlety, religious fervour, and heroic self-sacrifice, the Italian genius is inferior to no other in Europe. Further, there are two nations which in strength are perhaps even at present equal to those which M. Jouffroy described as bearing with them the whole race of mankind, which are growing vastly more rapidly than they, which are so situated as to be safer than the safest of them from permanent conquest, and which appear to be far more distant from their natural limits of increase. The possibilities before the United States and Russia are so grand that no mortal has a right to deny that the time may come when the mightiest power by sea at present will be doomed to stand before the one, and the mightiest on land before the other, like Hector before Achilles, able only in presence of the stronger and more heaven-favoured foe to resolve, "not inglorious at least shall I perish, but after doing some great thing that may be spoken of in ages to come."

> "Μὴ μὰν ἀσπουδέι γε καὶ ἀκλειῶς ἀπολοίμην,
> Ἀλλα μέγα ῥέξας τι καὶ ἐσσομένοισι πυθέσθαι."

To speak of the distinctive merits of nations as due to the operation of special faculties, also appears erroneous and misleading. Literally and strictly understood, indeed, it is so obviously absurd as to be indefensible, since every man of sane mind has the same faculties as every other. In order to get from it a credible meaning, we must understand by faculty merely an aptitude resulting from the circumstances in which a people has been placed, a facility of thought or action which has required time, long or short, to form. To affirm that a nation has a special faculty in this sense, is not only to make a loose and confused application of language, but to state what, if true, obviously both demands and admits of explanation instead of being itself the sufficient explanation of anything, since such a faculty is an effect, may be even of recent origin, or capable of being easily acquired; to attribute to a nation a special faculty in any other sense, has no warrant either in reason or facts. Undoubtedly there is more learning in Germany than in France or

England, but the causes plainly are not special faculties for learning granted to Germans and denied to Frenchmen and Englishmen, or even the same faculties in any exceptional measure—quicker apprehensions, more capacious memories, greater love of knowledge for its own sake, more patience of intellect or more energy of will—but the superiority of the arrangements and institutions in that country for the promotion of secondary and higher education, the monopoly of all military and political power by the nobility, the comparatively small dimensions of German trade until quite recently, and other general social circumstances which concur either in drawing or driving the *élite* of the middle and lower classes in Germany into some department of learning as the most accessible and promising sphere of ambition, while in France and England the most varied and powerful influences combine to attract them elsewhere. While the best minds among the youth of Germany are permanently gained to the service of science by being drawn into the professoriate of its numerous local and rival universities, similar minds are in France drawn, as by the suction of a maelstrom, into the vortex of Parisian society, and there lost to learning through absorption in financial speculation, political intrigue, journalistic ambitions, and all the caprices, aims, disappointments, and successes of a fleeting and feverish day. But the juristical school of Cujas, the philosophical school of Descartes, the French Benedictines, the French mathematicians and physicists who adorned with such profusion the earlier part of the present century; and, in a word, persons and works without number, have conclusively proved that Frenchmen are not necessarily, or in virtue of any essential characteristics of their nature, either less profound or less industrious, less original or less persevering, than Germans. Their present inferiority in science is not of nature's making but of their own; and, so far from regarding it as a necessity, they ought to set clearly before themselves, and resolutely endeavour to solve the problem, How to beat the Germans in science, since nothing can be more certain than that the nation which is for a sufficient length of time first in this respect will inevitably become first also in power, which is science applied—and in wealth, which is the result of

its application. Of course, what I believe true for France I believe true also for England. I utterly disbelieve that the English genius is in itself either less scientific and philosophical, or more worldly-wise and practical than the German, and deprecate the prevalence which that notion has obtained among us, seeing that it is not only a theoretically false, but a practically pernicious notion, leading us to dream that we may be dependent on other countries for our thoughts, and yet surpass them in action, and encouraging our statesmen in the deadly delusion, so widely spread among them, that they may safely leave the higher culture to itself. At the present moment, in almost all the chief departments of knowledge, we can put forward two or three British men who are as high as the highest of the Germans, which shows that it is not the constitution of the national genius which is to blame for our inferiority in learning and science ; as to men of the second rank, however, the Germans can count dozens against our units, which shows that our arrangements for producing scientifically disciplined minds and a solid scholarship must be lamentably inferior.

Had M. Jouffroy lived to the present day, it is most improbable that he would repeat either that civil wars were ended, or that the wars of the people were about to cease. We, who have so recently seen civil war in America, France, and Spain, will not venture to say it may not be seen again even in England or Germany. And the peoples are arming and preparing for war in a way which can scarcely fail to be followed by an enormous effusion of human blood. The spirit of war is being at this moment deliberately aroused over the continent of Europe with a systematic thoroughness, and on a largeness of scale perhaps unequalled in the world's history, and directly calculated to produce boundless disasters. To say these disasters will come would be to prophesy; but it is safe to say that if they do not come, it will not be because governments and peoples have not laboured industriously to bring them.

CHAPTER X.

GUIZOT.

THE eclectic philosophy had its counterpart, or rather complement, in doctrinaire politics. What the one was in speculation, the other was in action. The former, regarding all antecedent philosophies—sensualistic, idealistic, sceptical, and mystical—as composed of truth and error, as never wholly false but only incomplete, sought to separate what was true in each from what was false, and so to combine the truths thus obtained as to produce a complete philosophy, a complete expression of consciousness and reality. The latter, in precisely the same way, treated all antecedent political theories—monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical—as right in themselves, but wrong in relation to other theories,—wrong in their exclusiveness; and attempted, by selection, by compromise, and by combination, to do justice to *all* the forces of society, and to secure their complete representation and their harmonious development. They may thus be almost considered as the two sides of one system, or as different applications of the same principles. But as philosophy and politics, however closely connected, remain always very distinct departments of activity, and require very distinct and special talents for their successful cultivation, it was only natural that the chief representatives even of the eclectic philosophy and doctrinaire politics which flourished in France forty years ago, should not have been the same persons; that MM. Cousin and Jouffroy should not have been very eminent as politicians, nor M. Guizot and the Duc de Broglie as philosophers. Yet M. Guizot was drawn as directly and strongly to historical research and meditation by his political convictions and sentiments as M. Cousin by his philosophical principles and aims.

He felt himself compelled to seek in the past a vindication of the legitimacy of the various forces which had ruled society, and a proof of the various articles of the political creed which he believed ought to regulate the conduct of statesmen in the present and future, just as M. Cousin felt himself compelled to seek in it the truths contained in previous philosophies, in order to compose a philosophy which would be final because complete. The result was in both cases most favourable to historical inquiry and speculation. Indeed, eclecticism did more for the history of philosophy than for philosophy itself, and doctrinairism more for political history than for political science. As the philosophical speculations of M. Cousin, although brilliant, are much wanting in depth, thoroughness, and logical severity, so the political disquisitions of M. Guizot, notwithstanding their elevation of tone, their moderation, and good sense, are almost always somewhat superficial, and while displaying remarkable comprehensiveness of mind, testify also to a certain incapacity for what Locke calls "bottoming." M. Cousin and M. Guizot both showed great skill in constructing a symmetrical and elegant system, the one of philosophy and the other of policy, and both decidedly failed to rest their systems on sure foundations. Hence the eclecticism of the one and the doctrinairism of the other were speedily discredited, and are now merely things of the past. The impulse, however, which they gave to historical study still operates. In this connection no fair judge will deny them the heartiest gratitude and admiration.

Francis Guizot, born in 1787—two years before the outbreak of the first French Revolution—still lives, still labours, bearing the burden of his eighty-six years, and wearing the laurels gained in many fields of fame. The story of his life is known to all educated men, for he lived long full in the world's eye, has not been sparing of personal explanations and recollections, and has had his character, words, and actions closely scrutinised from many points of view. His name recalls to us numerous and valuable literary works, a professional activity the most distinguished and influential, great political services rendered when in opposition, great political ability displayed when in

power, brilliant oratorical achievements, dignity and fortitude in the bearing of adversity, recent labours in the defence of Christianity, and for the diffusion of the love of country, a great intellect, pure and noble sentiments, and the most rigid propriety in personal conduct. It recalls also, unfortunately, other things and qualities—lamentable oversights, strange mistakes, serious inconsistencies, faults which were almost crimes. In consequence of what has happened since, the Revolution of 1848 has few defenders now, and I do not defend it; but I confess still to think that doctrinairism, as put in practice by M. Guizot, went far to explain and far even to excuse it. His merits are so many, however, that I willingly content myself with this mere indication of a conclusion reluctantly reached and reluctantly entertained, and willingly confine myself to speak of him only in that capacity in which he won his purest and highest distinctions—in his character of philosophical historian.[1]

All the best qualities of M. Guizot's mind are seen to their fullest advantage in his historical works,—accuracy in investigation, thoroughness of scholarship, a laboriousness which leaves nothing necessary undone, comprehensiveness of view and moderation of judgment, insight into political causation, elevation of moral sentiment, religious reverence and conviction. He is not, however, strictly speaking, a great historian. He wants the narrative and descriptive power, the pictorial and dramatic imagination, the interest for what is individual in characters or actions, without which no man can be a great historical artist. He is, however, what is still rarer and not less important, a great historical thinker or philosopher. But perhaps we cannot fix more precisely what he is and what he is not, than by availing ourselves of the distinctions which he has himself drawn in the admirable estimate of Savigny's 'History of the Roman Law in the Middle Ages,' given in the eleventh lecture of the 'Cours de 1829.' "Every epoch, every historical matter, may, so to speak, be considered in three different aspects, and imposes on the historian a threefold task. He can—nay, ought

[1] He has been already studied in this aspect by Mr J. S. Mill, Discussions, vol. i.; by Sir Archibald Alison, Essays, vol. iii.; and by M. Renouvier, La Critique Philosophique, Prem^e. Année, i., 1872.

—first seek the facts themselves, collecting and bringing to light, without any other aim than exactitude, all that has happened. The facts once recovered, it is necessary to know what laws have governed them; how they were connected; what causes have brought about those incidents which are the life of society, and which propel it in certain paths towards certain ends. I wish to mark clearly and precisely the difference of the two studies. Facts, distinctively so called, outward and visible events, are the body of history—the members, bones, muscles, organs, material elements of the past; and the knowledge and description of them form what may be called *historical anatomy.* But for society, as for the individual, anatomy is not the only science. Facts not only exist, but are connected with one another; they succeed one another and are engendered by the action of certain forces, which operate under the empire of certain laws. There is, in a word, an organisation and life of societies as well as of individuals. This organisation has also its science, the science of the secret laws which preside over the course of events. This is the *physiology of history.* But neither historical physiology nor anatomy is complete and veritable history. You have enumerated the facts and traced the internal and general laws which produced them. Do you also know their external and living *physiognomy?* Have you before your eyes their individual and animate features? This is absolutely necessary, because these facts, now dead, once lived—the past has been the present; and unless it again become so to you, if the dead be not resuscitated, you know it not—you know not history. Could the anatomist and physiologist guess what man was if they had never seen him alive? The investigation of facts, the study of their organisation, the reproduction of their form and motion, these constitute what is truly history. And every great historical work, in order to be assigned its true position, should be examined and judged of in these relations."

When we examine the historical labours of M. Guizot himself from these three points of view, we find that he is certainly not seen to great advantage under the third. If we wish to know the external and living physiognomy of Merovingian and Carlovingian France—to have a truthful transcript of the indi-

vidual features and incidents of medieval life—we must turn not to his pages but to those of M. Augustin Thierry or M. Michelet. As a work of art, his 'History of the English Revolution' is certainly cold and colourless if compared with what Mr Carlyle has written on the same theme. With a correct and dignified style, with an eloquence which never fails and sometimes rises high, he yet shows comparatively little of the power which reproduces the form and motion of history, its local hues, its poetical truth, its dramatic aspects, the feelings of the hour, the peculiarities of individuals. It is altogether different in the other two relations. M. Guizot is very great as an historical anatomist, and still greater as an historical physiologist. He may not, indeed, in the former respect, rank as high as a Savigny, but the reason obviously is not inferiority of ability, but merely want of the time and leisure which the Berlin professor enjoyed. He gives ample evidence of possessing in a most eminent degree all the faculties which are called into action in the ascertainment, criticism, distribution, and comparison of facts. Then, no one will say of him what he justly says of Savigny—viz., that he overlooked the internal concatenation of facts, the organisation and laws of the social movement. It is in laying bare that concatenation and the motive forces of the social organism that his merits are most conspicuous. He shows a singular faculty for apprehending the ideas which underlie facts, the inner changes which determine outer changes—for detecting the social and intellectual tendencies of an epoch—for tracing the operation of the larger and more lasting causes which chiefly influence human affairs, and yet which escape the ordinary historian's vision. In a word, he has not been surpassed as an historical physiologist, as a student of the general and progressive organisation of social facts.

The fame of M. Guizot as a philosophical historian rests chiefly on his 'Histoire Générale de la Civilisation en Europe,' and 'Histoire de la Civilisation en France,' which consist of lectures delivered at the Sorbonne in the years 1828, 1829, and 1830. The 'Essais sur l'Histoire de France' (1st ed. 1823; 5th ed. 1841) is the substance of discourses delivered at an earlier period, and contains little which may not be found in

a more elaborate form in those two works. Indeed, four of the six essays which it contains—viz., those on "The Origin and Establishment of the Franks in Gaul," "The Causes of the Fall of the Merovingians and Carlovingians," "The Social State and Political Institutions of France under the Merovingians and Carlovingians," and "The Political Character of the Feudal *Régime*" —are simply the first drafts, as it were, of the views which he afterwards expounded more perfectly in the Leçons. The remaining two—the first and last essays in the volume—contain a little more of distinctive matter. In the former, "Concerning Municipal Government in the Roman Empire during the fifth century of the Christian Era," M. Guizot discusses a great problem which he has only touched on elsewhere, and which, as the translator and annotator of Gibbon's immortal work, he was specially prepared successfully to discuss. The problem was to explain the fall of the Roman empire. It had already occupied the minds of many thinkers, including a Montesquieu and Gibbon, and yet it received for the first time perhaps even an approximate solution from M. Guizot. His predecessors had merely treated of the general causes of Roman decadence in a general way, and had therefore merely talked round and round about the particular problem. They had referred the fall of the empire to the institution of slavery, to the despotism of the emperors, the decline of religious faith, luxury and moral corruption; and overlooked that, although all these things doubtless did indirectly contribute to the result, they must have done so only indirectly, since they were in full operation centuries before, when the empire was in all the glory of its strength. When Rome fell she was not more dependent on slave labour than when, under Scipio and Cæsar, her legions vanquished Hannibal and conquered Gaul; a religion infinitely superior to any she had ever had before, had won for itself general acceptance; and poverty prevented luxury from being nearly so widely spread as in former generations when the barbarians caused her no fear. It was, accordingly, a distinct and decided step towards a solution, although certainly not a complete or exhaustive solution, when M. Guizot, leaving vague generalities, fixed attention on the circumstance that the empire was

an agglomeration of towns held together by the central sovereign power, and showed how, by tracing Roman legislation regarding the *curiales*,—the class which managed municipal affairs, and not only paid all municipal expenses, but collected and were responsible for the revenue of the State—the landed but unprivileged class, the middle class, of Roman society,—they could be proved to have gradually sunk under their burdens, and at last to have disappeared. With their extinction the central authority had no longer resources; the legions could not be recruited with Roman men; the cities were unable to support one another or defend themselves; internal decay had insured the success of external violence.

The last essay of the volume is on "The Causes of the Establishment of a Representative System in England." It describes and explains the characteristics which distinguish the political development of England from that of France; how the history of England antecedent to the Norman conquest, and the circumstances of that conquest, had for result an equality of strength between royalty, aristocracy, and the commons, unknown elsewhere; and how the simultaneous unfolding of these different social elements enabled England to attain a government at once orderly and free, earlier than any Continental nation, and called forth that political good sense, that spirit of political compromise, which has long been one of her most conspicuous qualities. Ever since Montesquieu and some of his contemporaries gave popularity to the study of English political institutions, the British Constitution, or at least what was supposed to be the British Constitution, has had admirers in France anxious to see it transplanted to their own country. The possibility and desirableness of such transplantation were fundamental articles of the doctrinaire creed adopted by M. Guizot. That they were false and delusive articles, which have done much mischief in France, and which greatly misled M. Guizot as a practical politician, I am convinced; but, of course, they explain his predilection for the study of English constitutional history, shown not only by his elaborate researches regarding the English Revolution, but by his having devoted early in his political and professorial career an entire course of lectures to the develop-

ment of the views contained in the essay just mentioned. I refer to the 'Cours de 1822 sur les Origines et les Développements de la Constitution Anglaise,' which was published in 1851 as the second volume of the 'Histoire des Origines du Gouvernement Représentatif en Europe.' It is a work kindred in character and spirit to Hallam's 'Constitutional History of England,' although less elaborate. It may very profitably be read before Mr Hallam's work, and in connection with it, as it leaves off about the period at which the other begins.

The 'History of Civilisation in Europe,' and the 'History of Civilisation in France,' are closely connected works; indeed they may be regarded as one work. The former is, as it were, an introductory volume to the five volumes of which the latter consists. It is a summary statement of the positions, which they elucidate with all the illustrations, and confirm with all the proofs, deemed essential. It is indispensable to any right understanding of what M. Guizot has attempted and achieved as an historical philosopher, that we apprehend accurately the relation of these works to each other; and in the first lecture of the 'Cours de 1829,' he has been carefully explicit on the subject. What he says is to this effect. In the lectures delivered in 1828 he gave a general view of the history of European civilisation, and promised to study it in following years in detail. When he set about attempting, in the lectures for 1829, to fulfil his promise, he found he had to choose between two methods. He might recommence the Course of 1828, and proceed to go over in detail what had been gone over in almost breathless haste. But to that two insuperable objections presented themselves,—the difficulty of maintaining unity in a history so extensive, and the difficulty of mastering the immense extent and variety of knowledge which it required. He decides, therefore, to adopt the other method, that of abandoning the investigation of the general history of European civilisation in all the nations which have shared in it, and confining himself to the civilisation of one country, while yet so marking the differences between it and other countries, that it may reflect an image of the whole destiny of Europe. Although difficult, it is yet possible to acquire and use the knowledge

necessary to proceed thus, and possible also to pass from fact to fact without losing sight of the whole picture—to preserve unity of narrative along with an adequate study of particulars. The important question here arises, Which country ought to be selected? M. Guizot answers—France. Why? Because France is the country in which civilisation has appeared in its most complete form, where it has been most diffusive or communicative, and where it has most forcibly struck the European imagination. The superiority of French civilisation to that of other countries is shown not merely in there being greater amenity in social relations, greater gentleness of manners, a more easy and animated life in France than elsewhere, but still more decisively by the fact that there the essential elements of civilisation—the intellectual and social developments—have progressed more equally, and at a shorter distance from each other, than elsewhere. "In England the development of society has been more extensive and more glorious than that of humanity; social interests and social facts have there maintained a more conspicuous place, and exercised more power than general ideas; the nation seems greater than the individual; its great men, even its philosophers, belong to the practical school." "In Germany the development of civilisation has been slow and tardy, and the intellectual development has always surpassed and left behind social development; the human spirit has there been much more prosperous than the human condition." "In Italy civilisation has been neither essentially practical as in England, nor almost exclusively speculative as in Germany; but it has been weighed down and impeded from without, and the two powers—speculative genius and practical ability—have not lived in reciprocal confidence, in correspondence, in continual action and reaction." "In Spain neither great minds nor great events have been wanting, but they have appeared isolated and scattered like palm-trees in a desert." "In France, on the contrary, alongside of great events, revolutions, and public progress, we always find universal ideas and corresponding doctrines. Nothing has passed in the real world but the understanding has immediately seized it, and thence derived new riches; nothing has occurred within

the dominion of understanding which has not had in the real world, and that almost always immediately, its echo and result. This twofold character of intellectual activity and practical ability, of meditation and application, is shown in all the great events of French history, and in all the great classes of French society, and gives them an aspect which we do not find elsewhere. To France, therefore, must be ascribed the honour, that her civilisation has reproduced more faithfully than any other the general type and fundamental idea of civilisation."

M. Guizot, then, it will be observed, when he found himself compelled to study the history of civilisation in one great European nation instead of in all, did not abandon the idea with which he started, that of tracing the general history of European civilisation. He concentrated his faculties and researches on France, but only because he thought he could thus arrive more quickly and surely at the desired result. The positions which he sought to establish in the volumes on the history of civilisation in France, were just those which he had previously laid down in the volume on the history of civilisation in Europe. The more elaborate work was meant, notwithstanding its more special title, to be really as wide in its scope as the other, and to be, in fact, the continuation and development of the other. But at this point a doubt presents itself which M. Guizot has, perhaps, not satisfactorily dispelled. Does the civilisation of any one European nation give us the general type, or image, or fundamental idea of European civilisation as such? Is the history, say of France, essentially the history of Europe? Can the whole be discovered in any single part, or even in less than all the parts? I think M. Guizot should have put these questions quite clearly and distinctly to himself—more so, certainly, than he did—and that if he had he would have answered them differently. Had he simply maintained that, by noting the differences and resemblances between the civilisation of one European country and the others, a view of the general civilisation of Europe could be acquired, there would have been no ground for objection. In that case the general view would be obtained, not from a particular civilisation itself, but from its comparison with, and contrast to, the other particular civilisations. Any of

the more important countries of Europe might be chosen as the fixed term for this sort of comparison and contrast. Italy, Germany, England, France, would obviously all equally serve the purpose—the truth and value of the result depending, not on which civilisation is made the centre of comparison, but on the accuracy and thoroughness of the process of comparison. But M. Guizot goes much further. He takes up the position that there is a particular civilisation which answers to the idea of general civilisation; that there is one country in Europe, the civilisation of which is so much more perfect than that of the other countries, that it may be regarded as the normal form of the civilisation of Europe, an approximation to the absolute standard of civilisation, a practical standard by which to measure civilisation everywhere else. Now, a grave suspicion is raised against the legitimacy of this assumption by the fact, that those who make it differ widely as to which nation is to be deemed the pattern nation. Guizot argues that it must be France; but Gioberti writes a book to prove that it must be Italy; Hegel, and the Germans as a body, quietly assume or confidently affirm that the whole of what is called Christian civilisation may equally be called Germanic civilisation; and Mr Buckle has no doubt that the history of England is that which shows most clearly "the normal march of society, and the undisturbed operation of those great laws by which the fortunes of mankind are ultimately regulated." It is not enough to refer this variety of discordant decisions to the operation of national prejudices. The question still remains, Why is it—how is it—that national prejudices have in this instance such power? And the only satisfactory answer to that question is, —because no particular civilisation is normal, or answers as a whole to the idea of civilisation. It can only be made to appear so by narrowing the idea of civilisation to suit the pretensions put forth on its behalf. By a similar narrowing of the idea, quite as warranted, another standard may be obtained which will be as favourable to some other civilisation. Grant that in the civilisation of France intellectual activity and practical ability, meditation and application, have, as M. Guizot says, progressed more equally, and at a shorter distance from each

other, than in England—and what then? Does it follow that it reproduces better the general type and fundamental idea of civilisation than the civilisation of England? No; but merely that it reproduces it better in one respect. It may reproduce it much worse in some equally essential respect. And an Englishman looking at it in *that* respect may quite as fairly conclude it to be inferior to English civilisation, as M. Guizot has concluded it to be superior. This is precisely what Mr Buckle has done. He, like M. Guizot, found himself compelled, by the magnitude of the task, to write the history, not of general civilisation, but of the civilisation of a single people; and he has endeavoured, still more elaborately than M. Guizot, to show that he could realise the larger design within the narrower compass.[1] He fixes, however, on England as the nation which has approached nearest to a complete and perfect pattern, chiefly on the ground that, "of all European countries, England is the one where, during the longest period, the government has been most quiescent, and the people most active; where popular freedom has been settled on the widest basis; where each man is most able to say what he thinks, and to do what he likes; where every one can follow his own bent, and propagate his own opinions; where, religious persecution being little known, the play and flow of the human mind may be clearly seen, unchecked by those restraints to which it is elsewhere subjected; where the profession of heresy is least dangerous, and the practice of dissent most common; where hostile creeds flourish side by side, and rise and decay without disturbance, according to the wants of the people, unaffected by the wishes of the Church, and uncontrolled by the authority of the State; where all interests and all classes, both spiritual and temporal, are most left to take care of themselves; where that meddlesome doctrine called Protection was first attacked, and where alone it has been destroyed; and where, in a word, those dangerous extremes to which interference gives rise having been avoided, despotism and rebellion are equally rare, and concession being recognised as the groundwork of policy, the national progress has been least disturbed by the power of privileged classes, by the influ-

[1] 'Hist. of Civilisation in England,' i. 209-221, 1st ed.

ence of particular sects, or by the violence of arbitrary rulers." Now, the reason which Mr Buckle thus gives for choosing English civilisation as normal, may be no better than M. Guizot's for choosing French civilisation, but neither is it worse. It presupposes a different standard, but one quite as good. And this holds true even if we grant the accuracy of the objection which M. Guizot makes to English civilisation—viz., that it has been more favourable to the development of society than of humanity, of the nation than of the individual. It is an objection, however, I may remark, which Englishmen at least will certainly not grant, and in which probably few candid foreigners even will concur. We in England are generally under the belief that historical and social conditions have been in no Continental nation so favourable to the development of individuality as here; and, with all due distrust of national judgments, as exceedingly likely indeed to be baseless prejudices, I think this is one the truth of which few competent third parties will contest. I am quite unable to see that the great men of England have belonged more exclusively to the practical school than those of France. Its philosophers do not seem to me to have done so, and I profess to have studied most of the philosophers of both countries.

I might proceed to show that claims as strong might be put forward on behalf of the civilisation of Italy and Germany, as those which Guizot has produced for that of France, and Mr Buckle for that of England. Was not Italy from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Reformation, on the whole, the most civilised nation of Europe, and that which exerted, through religion, learning, art, industry, and commerce, the greatest influence on the civilisation of other nations? The time which has elapsed since is comparatively short. While France developed her civilisation along the path of centralisation, Germany seemed to retrograde by travelling in the opposite direction; but does it not remain to be seen which path is really the best, and whether France, after having apparently moved straight up to the goal, may not have to retrace her steps and come back by another way before she can truly reach it? That Germany has gone round about and France straight forward, by no means of itself proves that the French course has been the better one, and

still less that it is the only right one. A straight line is in practice often the greatest distance between two points. I deem, then, the claims made on behalf of various civilisations to be regarded as the exclusive representatives of general civilisation no less inadequate and illusory than they are invidious. If true in what they affirm, they are false in what they deny. Alike in France, Germany, England, and Italy, civilisation has had a special and one-sided, not a general and normal development. It cannot be fairly judged of in any one of them by what it is in any other. If we would know the general type of civilisation we must study all the specimens of civilisation, and especially all its chief specimens. A part can never be the whole.

The first three lectures of the Course of 1828—that on "The General History of Civilisation in Europe,"—contain the preliminary observations which M. Guizot deemed necessary. They are a statement of views and principles essential to a right understanding of his labours in the department of historical philosophy. He begins in the most natural manner—viz., with an attempt to fix the meaning of the terms "European civilisation." That is his subject. It presents a very wide field for research, beyond which he has not attempted to range. He has never sought to construct a philosophy of history—he has never professed to have discovered a universal law of history; he has attempted only to analyse the civilisation of Christian Europe into its elements, and to trace the causes and stages of its development. In this reference nothing can be more accurate or succinct than the words of Mr Mill: "His subject is not history at large, but modern European history; the formation and progress of the existing nations of Europe. Embracing, therefore, only a part of the succession of historical events, he is precluded from attempting to determine the law or laws which preside over the entire evolution. If there be such laws—if the series of states through which human nature and society are destined to pass, have been determined more or less precisely by the original constitution of mankind, and by the circumstances of the planet on which we live—the order of their succession cannot be discovered by modern or by European experience alone;

it must be ascertained by a conjunct analysis, so far as possible, of the whole of history, and the whole of human nature. M. Guizot stops short of this ambitious enterprise; but, considered as preparatory studies for promoting and facilitating it, his writings are most valuable. He seeks, not the ultimate, but the proximate, causes of the facts of modern history; he inquires in what manner each successive condition of modern Europe grew out of that which next preceded it; and how modern society altogether, and the modern mind, shaped themselves from the elements which had been transmitted to them from the ancient world."[1]

M. Guizot uses these terms "European civilisation," he says, because it is evident that there is a European civilisation; that a certain unity pervades the civilisation of the various European states; that, notwithstanding infinite diversities of time, place, and circumstance, this civilisation takes its first rise in facts almost wholly similar, proceeds everywhere upon the same principles, and tends to produce almost everywhere analogous results. He insists that civilisation is as really a fact as any material and visible individual event; a general, hidden, complex fact, difficult to describe, difficult to trace the progress or history of, but which none the less exists, with a right to be described and to have its history written. What, then, he asks, is involved in this complex fact which we call civilisation?

He answers, that, in the first place, it involves progress, improvement, amelioration. He merely appeals in proof to "the natural good sense of mankind," to "general instinct." I confess I greatly distrust such appeals, having found that they are generally either rhetorical substitutes for reasons, or slovenly modes of adducing facts. M. Guizot has occasionally had recourse to them, and in almost every instance it has been to the prejudice of truth. Thus, he appeals to common-sense in support of the superiority of the civilisation of France over that of other countries; a most illegitimate procedure, since manifestly nothing save a large collection and careful comparison of historical facts can decide a question of the kind. The appeal in the present case has neither a better warrant nor better success.

[1] 'Dissertations and Discussions,' ii. 223, 224.

The "natural good sense of mankind" has no right to pronounce civilisation to be progress, or even progress to be an essential and universal characteristic of civilisation; the truth or falsity of these propositions must be determined by facts; and the facts happen to establish that both are false. A very large part of the civilisation of the world is stationary or declining. Progressive civilisation is probably not the rule but the exception. It is only progressive civilisation which involves the notion of progress. I shall not contest the competency of "the natural good sense of mankind" to decide *that*, but I desire other evidence for all truths which are not truisms.

Although progress is not essentially involved in the idea of civilisation, the error of M. Guizot has fortunately exerted no evil influence on the course of his speculations, because European civilisation, the subject of his studies, is, viewed as a whole, undoubtedly progressive. What, then, is the progress of which he says civilisation, *i.e.*, merely the European phase of civilisation, consists? It comprehends, he answers, two facts or conditions: the development of society, the perfecting of civil life, on the one hand; and the development of the individual, the perfecting of the internal life of man himself, his faculties, sentiments, and ideas, on the other hand. And these two conditions, these two movements—the progress of society, and the progress of humanity—are, he argues, so connected, that sooner or later whatever improves or degrades the internal man turns to the profit or hurt of society, and whatever affects the development of society similarly affects the individual. The progress of humanity is the end; that of society the means. It has been said that M. Guizot forgets this distinction in practice, and studies exclusively the progress of society. Those who have urged the charge, however, have overlooked the Course of 1829, which is the only complete Course of the three, and in which there is a careful examination, not merely of the political but of the intellectual state of Europe during the period of which it treats; and that the lectures of 1828 and 1830 did not embrace more than political and social development, simply because the Courses of these years were unfinished,—the former having been begun late, and the latter prematurely broken off in consequence of

political events. More might be said for an attack on the distinction itself. Humanity—internal life—intellectual development, are hardly synonymous expressions, and they are neither logical antitheses nor co-ordinates to society—civil life—political development. But it must be considered that a logically satisfactory division is here scarcely possible, and that whatever faults that of M. Guizot may have had, it was not only much better than none, but very tolerably served his purpose.

He shows in the second lecture that modern civilisation is distinguished from ancient civilisation by being much less simple, much more diversified and complicated, by the continued coexistence, conflict, and co-operation of a vast variety of powers and interests which in the ancient world were found apart. He insists that this in great part accounts for its superiority. And he explains it by the great diversity of the elements from which, and of the circumstances under which, modern society was formed. When Rome fell, she left behind her the municipal system, the idea of imperial majesty, and a body of written law; nor did she drag down with her the Christian Church, an organisation resting on religious doctrines and convictions, and possessed of a regular government and definite aims. Alongside of the Church was the barbaric invasion, animated by a spirit of personal liberty and of voluntary association previously unknown. Thus, at the beginning of modern civilisation, there were almost all the elements which have united in its progressive development; three societies—the municipal, a legacy of the Roman Empire, the Christian, and the Barbaric society—very variously organised, founded upon wholly different principles, and inspiring men with wholly different sentiments. "We find the craving after the most absolute independence side by side with the most complete submission; military patronage side by side with ecclesiastical dominion; the spiritual and temporal powers everywhere present; the canons of the Church, the learned legislation of the Romans, the almost unwritten customs of the barbarians; everywhere the mixture, or rather the coexistence of the most diverse races, languages, social situations, manners, ideas, and impressions." This lecture has justly been the object of special

admiration. The theory it contains is not only indubitably true as a whole, but highly important and beautifully expounded.

M. Guizot proceeds in the third lecture to point out that although the facts are as he has stated, an opinion directly to the contrary prevails, and each element, each system, has put forth a claim to have alone ruled society. "A school of feudal publicists, represented by M. de Boulanvilliers, pretends that after the fall of the Roman Empire, the conquering nation, afterwards become the nobility, possessed all powers and rights, which they have lost only through the usurpation of kings and peoples; a school of monarchists, represented by the Abbé Dubos, maintains, on the other hand, that all the acquisitions of the nobility have been unjustly wrung from the German kings, who, as the heirs of the Roman emperors, alone ruled legitimately; a democratic school, represented by the Abbé de Mably, argues that nobles and kings have only risen to power on the ruins of popular freedom, and that the government of society primitively belonged to, and still properly belongs to, the people; while above all these monarchical, aristocratical, and popular pretensions, rises theocratical pretension, the claim of the Church to rule society in virtue of her divine title and mission." This leads our author to insist first on what he calls the idea of political legitimacy. All powers claim to be legitimate. They all refuse to admit themselves founded on force. They all thereby profess to rest on right, justice, reason. And this is why they also claim long duration, a high antiquity; for the mere fact that a power has long existed is itself a ground for believing that reason and right have in some measure belonged to it. "From the mere fact of its enduring, we may conclude with certainty that a society is not completely absurd, insensate, or iniquitous—that it is not utterly destitute of those elements of reason, truth, and justice which alone can give life to society. If, further, the society develops itself—if its principle grows in strength and is daily accepted by a greater number of men — that convincingly proves that in the lapse of time there has been progressively introduced into it more reason, justice, and right. It is this introduction of right and truth into the social state which has

given rise to the idea of political legitimacy; it is thus that it has been established in modern civilisation."

M. Guizot is here—what he very rarely is—obscure; the reason of which no doubt is, the mysterious nature of the subject, the inscrutable profundity of the idea of political legitimacy. It is only in the dark that such a spectre of a thought can show itself. The light causes it to vanish—makes apparent its nonentity. It pretends to be a something—a right to authority—a claim to obedience; but the slightest criticism, the slightest explanation even, shows it to be in and of itself absolutely nothing. The right of any power to rule in society depends solely on the truth and justice of the reasons on which the right is rested; legitimacy is a word which may be allowably used to express a conviction that these reasons are in a given instance satisfactory, but not to denote a reason in itself, nor anything apart from the reasons, anything added to or developed out of the reasons. Of course, if this were admitted, there would be an end of what is spoken of as political legitimacy in France. Certainly, a French legitimist is a man who argues that the claims of his party to rule are good because of legitimacy, not that they are legitimate exclusively because, and only in so far as, they are good. Legitimacy is a fiction which he interposes between his own mind or the public mind and reasons which he half-consciously suspects to be an insufficient basis for his theory; a fiction which serves to conceal their insufficiency from himself and others. It is curious to see a mind like that of M. Guizot under the sway of so poor an idol; curious to see how, instead of "casting it to the moles and bats," he decks and dresses it up anew for public homage. To M. de Boulanvilliers, feudalist; the Abbé Dubos, monarchist; the Abbé de Mably, democrat; and the Comte de Maistre, defender of the theocracy, he virtually says,—"I admit all your claims; you are all right in what you affirm, and wrong only in what you deny; the powers which you severally defend are all legitimate: and my system, which comprehends and harmonises them all, is consequently pre-eminently legitimate. It is a great word—a great idea—legitimacy." And there is a certain impartiality and compre-

hensiveness in the answer which make it attractive and plausible. Yet none the less is it erroneous and ensnaring. The cobweb may not be so perceptible when thus drawn out wider and thinner, but that is all,—it is still there. The truth in this case is not to be found in a general affirmation, but in a general negation. The claims which different parties have made under the name of legitimacy have not had their source in the facts and reasons which truly entitle these parties to a certain measure of authority, but *in the insufficiency of their facts and reasons as a title to all the authority which they desire to exercise.* Instead, therefore, of all the claims being granted, all ought to be repelled and this truth affirmed—that no power has any other legitimacy than its reasonableness and its utility. This, besides being a truth, will be found at least as impartial and comprehensive a conclusion as M. Guizot's.

He next maintains that "the very dispute which has arisen between the various systems that have a share in European civilisation upon the question which predominated at its origin, proves that then they all coexisted, without any one of them prevailing generally enough, or certainly enough, to give to society its form and its name." He points out that this was precisely the characteristic of the barbarian epoch. "It was the chaos of all elements, the infancy of all systems, a universal turmoil, in which even strife was not systematic." The work of the centuries which have since elapsed has been to effect in some measure the reconciliation of these elements, the amalgamation of these systems, and to bring order and peace, with their products, out of this chaos and turmoil. And the task which M. Guizot proposed to himself was to trace the progress of the work of the centuries.

Other labours—other duties—prevented the complete performance of what he intended; but he accomplished sufficient to show both the excellence of his method of operation and the greatness of his intellect. The history of Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire is divided into three periods; the period of confusion, the feudal period, and the modern period. The outlines of the development of civilisation during these three periods were twice drawn by M. Guizot, first in the 'Essais'

and next in the 'Cours de 1828.' But he rightly felt that outlines were not enough—that what was above all needed was a thorough, a detailed, an exhaustive analysis of civilisation. In the 'Cours de 1829' he undertook and accomplished such an analysis of civilisation, so far as it was represented by the civilisation of France, for the period of confusion—for the five centuries between Clovis and the end of the Carlovingian dynasty. In the following year he entered on the analysis of the feudal period; and was carrying it forward on the same comprehensive scale, and with an ability and success no less remarkable, when his Course was abruptly terminated before it was half finished—before the speculative, religious, and literary characteristics of the period had been brought under review. Beyond that point the work, unfortunately, never got. The last or strictly modern period of European, or even French, history was never taken up at all. Thus the Course of 1829 is the only one in which the method of M. Guizot is seen fully exemplified; in which a period of civilisation is analysed with the thoroughness and exhaustiveness which he deemed essential. It is especially in that Course that his historical philosophy is to be seen in operation. Let us recall what he does there.

After the preliminary lecture to which I have already had occasion to refer, he describes the social and intellectual, the civil and religious, state of society in Gaul prior to the German invasion, at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century (L. 2-6); then the dispositions, the manners, and institutions of the Germans before they began to take possession of the lands of the Celt and the Roman (7); and next, the invasion and conquest itself, its character, the changes it caused in the distribution of society, its various immediate consequences (8). These are, as it were, the three scenes of the first act of the drama; after having delineated which, our author turns to trace through the two following centuries the action and reaction of the Barbarian and Romanised societies, their progressive development and amalgamation, alike in the civil, the religious, and the intellectual order of things; as to the civil order, showing how the Barbarian codes of law arose and how the Roman law was perpetuated (9-11); as to the religious order,

explaining the internal organisation of the Church, the varieties of grade and function among its regular and secular clergy, its relations with civil society, its aims, its tendencies, its influence (12-15); and, as illustrative of the intellectual life of the period, analysing and describing its scanty literature, both sacred and profane (16-18). The fall of the Merovingian and the rise of the Carlovingian dynasty about the middle of the eighth century introduced a third epoch, a third act; and after showing the nature and causes of that revolution (19), M. Guizot dwells upon the position and significance of the reign of Charlemagne —on the character and designs of that great monarch—on his influence, direct and indirect, on outward affairs, legislation, and the development of mind,—and thence proceeds to trace, step by step, the operation of the causes which decomposed his vast empire, and, at the same time, produced the feudal system (20-25); nor does he forget to study either the history of the Church (26-27), or the movement and manifestations of reflective thought (28-29) during the same period. In fact, he analyses the entire constitution and development of society during these five centuries; lays bare all its essential elements, all its chief forces; traces them all continuously from the beginning to the end of the period investigated; traces them separately, yet also in connection, never forgetting that they are the component parts or principles of a single self-dependent and active whole.

The originality of M. Guizot's work consists in the truly scientific spirit and character of his method. He was the first to dissect a society in the same comprehensive, impartial, and thorough way in which an anatomist dissects the body of an animal, and the first to study the functions of the social organism in the same systematic and careful manner in which the physiologist studies the functions of the animal organism. Before him there had been a vast amount both of historical research and historical speculation; states, ages, classes, individuals, had had their histories, some of which were excellent; the development of laws, manners, sciences, arts, letters, had been traced, and in some cases not only learnedly but with considerable insight into causation; and there had even been systems not a few as to the course, and plan, and laws of

history as a whole; yet he was fully entitled, I think, to speak of the work he accomplished as new. It was not conceived of before the eighteenth century. It was first truly commenced by himself. And what a noble commencement he made! Of course, in a work so extensive, so difficult, every careful student must find something to criticise, something to dissent from; yet hardly one will deny that it is a model of scientific skill, comprehensively treating of all the vast variety of facts included in civilisation, while never allowing to drop out of sight the unity of life which underlies the multiplied manifestations; that it is not only wonderfully true and satisfactory as an organic whole, but that it has illuminated a multitude of particular points and dispelled a multitude of serious errors; that it disclosed in every order of social phenomena a significance unnoticed before, by the manner in which it showed them in constant contact with the other orders of phenomena.

The application which M. Guizot made of his method to a portion of history was conclusive evidence that the same method could be applied to all history. It was, however, more. It was a practical, irrefragable proof of the existence of a science of history, not indeed in every sense of the word science, but in the most usual sense, the only sense in which there is a science of geology or of physiology. He applied the same sort of method, the same rules of method, which are employed in these sciences, and he obtained results as certain, as comprehensive, as important, as those which are reached through geological or physiological research. The term science may be so strictly defined that branches of knowledge like geology and physiology have no right to be called sciences; the term law is very often so defined that no geological or physiological truth is entitled to the name; but if science and law be used so as to include such divisions of knowledge and to designate their highest truths, there can be no reasonable doubt of the existence of historical science and historical law. M. Guizot has proved their existence, as Columbus proved the existence of the New World when he sailed onwards until he reached it.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SOCIALISTIC SCHOOL CONTINUED: BUCHEZ AND LEROUX.

I.

The direction of thought inaugurated by Saint-Simon and Fourier was followed by various authors who applied themselves to the study of the laws of history. Three of them especially claim our attention, — Philippe Joseph Benjamin Buchez, Pierre Leroux, and Auguste Comte.

M. Buchez was born in 1796, and died a few years ago. His professional duties as a physician did not prevent his writing largely on philosophy, religion, history, and politics. He was for some time a member of the Saint-Simonian society, but left it in consequence of aversion to the strange theological dogmas of its spiritual chief, M. Enfantin. He edited, along with M. Roux, the parliamentary history of the early periods of the first French Revolution. He was raised by the Revolution of 1848 to the presidency of the National Constituent Assembly. The honour could not have been conferred on a more sincere or ardent republican, on a more amiable or better-intentioned man; but he wanted the firmness, decision, and political capacity needed in a situation so difficult and in days so tempestuous.

He began his philosophical career in 1833 with the publication of his 'Introduction à la Science de l'Histoire,' which was received by the public with considerable favour, and very warmly commended by the eminent jurist, M. Lerminier. A second edition—"revue, corrigée, et augmentée"—appeared in 1842. In the second edition M. Buchez felt at liberty to dispense with several discussions on general philosophical problems which he thought necessary in the first, having in the interval published a 'Traité de Philosophie' and an 'Introduction à

l'Étude des Sciences Médicales,' where they found more appropriate places. He added much more, however, than he retrenched, and so expanded into two volumes what had been originally one. Of course I make use of the second edition.

The work commences with two prefatory chapters, the first describing the present condition of society, and the second explaining the general purpose of the treatise, the thought which gave rise to it and rules it. The picture of society is painted in the gloomiest colours. Distrust, selfishness, misery, are described as spread over all. Class is represented as at war with class; the rich as restless and insecure; the poor as envious and oppressed; women as frivolous, unfortunate, and enslaved; religion, moral principle, worthy aspirations, sure and elevating hopes, as lamentably wanting. The sight of the evil suggests the question, Is there a remedy? The consideration of that question leads to inquiry into the nature of man and of society, and that to the search for a science of history. It is history which shows us the actions of humanity, and only through its actions can we know its nature, trace its past, or foresee its future fortunes. Hence it is the science of history which must discover the final causes of human societies, explain their revolutions, account for their miseries, and suggest the appropriate remedies.

The first book treats of the design and foundation of the science of history, and consists of seven chapters. In Chap. I., M. Buchez seeks the definition of the science. Science, he argues, is a systematised whole of knowledge, an organised body of principles and consequences, co-ordinated in relation to an end or purpose. Science can only be defined according to its end. The definition of a science ought to include a statement of the purpose which it serves. Like Comte and others who had been taught in the school of Saint-Simon, he insists on the prevision of phenomena as the test of true science. He defines, accordingly, the science of history as a science which has for end the prevision of the social future of the human race in the exercise of its free agency. But is prevision possible where there is free will? or, in other words, is a science of history possible? This question M. Buchez discusses in Chap. II., under the impression that he is the first who has done so. Leaving its

more thorough investigation to other parts of his work, he here treats of it, however, only in the most general way. He points out that history as a whole and in all its parts is not stationary; that it is a process in which beliefs, manners, actions, are constantly varying; that, in a word, it *moves;*—further, that movement is of two kinds, fatalistic and free: and then, having endeavoured to establish that all human and social movements tend towards ends which are not arbitrary but determined by man's nature and rooted in the reason of things, he concludes that their course can be in some measure foreseen and calculated, —which suffices, he thinks, to show that a science of history is possible.

In the next chapter we are told that the science of history rests on two ideas,—that of humanity and that of progress. And the four following chapters treat of these two ideas. The former is but feebly dealt with. Humanity he explains as meaning the whole human species, the entire succession of generations and the entire host of peoples, regarded as one vast society, bound together by manifold ties of nature and responsibility, participant in one spiritual life, a continuous education, and an unbroken tradition, and predestined and organised for the realisation of one great aim. He employs two arguments to prove the truth of this conception. The first is, that "humanity is the function of the universe," — a grandiose phrase, by which M. Buchez means, on the one hand, that humanity is not self-existent and self-dependent, but, as geology, physics, physiology, and other sciences show, closely related to the various orders of phenomena amidst which it exists, so that an essential alteration in any of them would render its existence impossible; and, on the other hand, that the whole universe is subordinate to man. His other argument is, that the activity of the individual is conditioned by that of the nation, and the activity of the nation by that of the race,—or, in a word, that the end of the race determines the place and character of all minor ends.

The idea of progress is treated with much greater ability and success. M. Buchez gives in a special chapter a better history of the idea than any one had given before him. Another chap-

ter on the definition of the idea shows that Saint-Simon's best thoughts on the subject had largely fructified in his disciple's mind. The remarks which he makes under this head on the consequences which may be truly drawn from the idea, and on those which are falsely drawn from it, are generally both just and useful; while those on the resemblances and differences between mathematical and historical series, successions of quantities and successions of actions, are particularly valuable. Up to the time of Saint-Simon, progress in history had been merely stated and illustrated as a fact; with him and his followers it began to be analysed. The impulse to analysis came from natural science, and especially from physiological science, which became aware in the earlier part of the century of the immense significance of the ideas or facts of development and organic evolution. In this connection it merits remark that M. Buchez is careful to show that human progress is a part of the law and order of the world,—that progress is not merely an historical but also a universal fact.

The second book of his treatise is occupied with "The Methods of the Science of History." The following is a very brief summary of its contents. The aim of all scientific investigation is to discover the order of succession of phenomena, and to ascertain their relations of dependence, so that one phenomenal state being given, those which precede and those which will follow it may be known. Science is a power of prevision, and prevision has two degrees,—a lower, founded on the knowledge of the order of succession of phenomena—and a higher, founded on the knowledge of the law of their generation. Both imply the coexistence and presence of two conditions,—a *constant*, *i.e.*, an invariable principle of order in the production of phenomena, and of *variations* in the manifestation. There are both "constants" and "variations" in history. There are "constants," because the faculties of men have been neither increased nor diminished in number in the long series of generations. There are "variations," because these same faculties have increased in energy and range of action both as regards physical nature and social life. The "constants" originate in human spontaneity, and all the active elements subordinate thereto; the "variations" are the expres-

sion of all the difficulties of realisation, of all man's struggles against the inanimate world or against mankind itself. If we take the various social constants of history, make of each a subject of special study, and range under it according to the dates of occurrence all the variations which belong to it, the result will be so many linear classifications of facts, identical in essence, homological in character, chronological in order, and increasing or decreasing in some relation of proportion. These linear classifications or series give some knowledge of the course of succession among phenomena, and some power of prevision; but only a knowledge which is slight and imperfect, only a power of prevision of the feeblest and lowest kind. It is of the very nature of the process to overlook the great facts that human nature is a whole, and that all its faculties, all the social constants, act simultaneously, act and react at every instant on each other. In order to bring events under a common heading, it has to separate them from all other kinds of events, however closely connected with them in reality. It does not enable us to determine the nature, number, or relative importance of the different social constants and the series dependent on them. It tells us nothing except that a certain order of facts tends to increase or tends to disappear. It needs to be supplemented, therefore, by another process or method,—one which will put us in possession of the law of the generation of phenomena. (I.-IV.)

This law must be sought among the laws of human activity,—the cause of every social change,—and these in its modes of manifestation or forms of production, not in its essence or in the abstract categories of reason. Social activity is simply the sum of individual activities, and cannot be essentially different in its laws and characteristics from the forces which compose or engender it. The law of the generation of social phenomena must therefore be involved in the analogy between the faculties of the individual and of humanity. This implies that that analogy contains both a law of constants and a law of variations. The first of all social constants is a common end of activity, a consciousness of a common work to do —not merely community of belief, language, or locality. It is

that which makes a society, however numerous the individuals which compose it or the ages through which it passes, a single living and acting being. It is that also which gives rise to all other social constants, such as the wants of spiritual conservation, material conservation, individual conservation, good government, right, the discharge of duty, &c., with all the institutions which correspond to them. From it, the true principle of social synthesis, of social life, every other constant may be deduced, and only through such deduction can they be assigned their proper places. (V.-VI.)

The laws of variation are twofold—logical and tendential. The movement determined by logical law is the succession of states through which, an end of activity being given, history must necessarily pass in order that it may attain outward existence and embodiment. There is, according to M. Buchez, such a movement in the individual mind; since every action which has for end to manifest externally any idea or spiritual principle must necessarily pass in an invariable order through the three stages of desire, reasoning, and realisation. This logical law is universal. There is another which is more limited. Ideas involving a doctrine, plan, project, &c., in order to be realised must not only be desired, demonstrated, and executed, but must pass through two secondary states, which may be called the one theoretical and the other practical. These two movements frequently so intersect and combine that each period of the ternary movement may be decomposed into two periods, according to the binary movement, and each period of the binary movement into three periods, according to the ternary movement, and this many times. Now, social activity is subject to the same conditions and laws as individual activity. It passes through states similarly related, similar in character and functions, and passes through them in the same order; although what lasts but an instant in the history of the individual often occupies an age in the life of the race. Thus—to take only the ternary movement—every great epoch of humanity, which, as we shall presently see, M. Buchez identifies with every *revelation*, has three periods or stages. There is first that of the revelation of the principle, that in which doctrines are im-

parted and accepted as immediate satisfactions to emotional wants,—the age of theology; next that of rationalism, of scholastic explanation and exposition; and finally, that of practical experience and application, of the close study and skilful utilising of all kinds of facts,—the period of Christian history, for example, which dates from Bacon and Descartes: the first corresponding to the stage of desire, the second to that of reasoning, and the third to that of execution in the movement of individual activity. It is unnecessary to describe the minute and complicated, yet regular and systematic, subdivision of these periods through binary and ternary decompositions. Let it suffice to say that these decompositions do not prevent the entire social development being reducible, as Saint-Simon taught, to organic or synthetical, and critical or analytical ages. (VII.)

The principles of the movement called tendential are spiritual appetencies continuous in their action, indefinitely progressive, and always aspiring after an end. They have their foundation in the social constants, and constitute the variations which form the elements of the series; each social constant being capable of becoming the basis of a progressive series. The constants may be viewed as regards either organised corporations or individuals, and this leads to the classification of tendencies through their relation to duties and rights: but as, after reading several times what M. Buchez has written concerning these tendencies, I find myself unable to understand it, I can only report that he believes he has discovered and described a method which remedies the defects inherent in the mere analysis of history into separate chronological series of similar events considered as a means of attaining scientific certainty and prevision. His remarks on the conversion of the laws of the logical and tendential movements into methods of historical classification and prevision are, on the whole, both intelligible and just. (VIII.-IX.)

The third book is devoted to the consideration of four of the most important social constants, the common end of activity, art, science, and physical labour, but unfortunately in the way of mere general disquisition; so that it contains exceedingly little which properly belongs to a philosophy of history. The

next two books are wholly occupied with matters still more extraneous and irrelevant; the fourth treating of the idea of progress as a means of forming encyclopædias of science and of education; and the fifth propounding a multitude of geological speculations, mostly worthless.

In the sixth book, M. Buchez reaches the sixth day of the Mosaic account of creation, and so plants his foot again on history, or, at least, on what he calls androgeny. But more than the half even of this book is occupied with discussions regarding the creation of man, original sin, the deluge, &c., of a kind little calculated to benefit historical science. In its fourth chapter, however, we come to what may, perhaps, be fairly considered the chief doctrine of his system. It is that Divine intervention has been the great motive force in the development of humanity; that the principle of each distinct historical synthesis, of each complete logical epoch, the common aim of every entire civilisation, is only to be found in a *revelation*. History is represented as having four great stages, each initiated by a universal revelation given either through the inspiration of certain men by God, or the incarnation of God in man. The first revelation was made through Adam; and founded an epoch which had for end the conversion of its precepts, enjoining the domestic duties, into habits and institutions; the second, given through Noah, founded an epoch which had for end the realisation of the more comprehensive class of duties involved in the relationships, both internal and external, of tribes and races; the third was imparted to some great prophet who lived where the sons of Japheth were in contact with those of Shem, so that its influence might extend to Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Rome, and was designed to communicate the sentiment of social unity and the idea of equality, along with that of the diversity of functions; while the last of all was the perfect revelation of truth and life in Christ, the source of a civilisation which has lasted eighteen centuries, and has still before it an indefinite future. The revelation given to Moses is not included in the series, because, although most important, it was not universal but particular —*i.e.*, designed for a single people.

The seventh book is a succession of pictures of the four great

epochs of history, and of the lesser periods which they contain. These are but feebly and inaccurately drawn. Perhaps M. Buchez thought that the 'Essai d'Histoire Universelle' and 'Histoire des Transformations Religieuses et Morales des Peuples' of M. Boullard, and the 'Manuel d'Histoire Universelle' of Dr Ott, both friends and almost disciples, rendered it unnecessary for him to bestow much care on this part of his task.

We have now a general knowledge of what M. Buchez has done in connection with the science of history. What judgment are we to pass thereon? My findings are as follows: First, his treatise is prolix, wearisome, and in some places apparently almost devoid of meaning. Second, three out of its seven books are not occupied with the science of history at all; and, entirely irrespective of condensation, by the simple exclusion of what was irrelevant, it could have been easily and most advantageously reduced to less than half its actual size. Third, what is most distinctive in M. Buchez's theory—the division of historical development into four great epochs originated by four universal revelations, of each epoch into three periods corresponding to desire, reasoning, and performance, and of each of these periods into a theoretical and practical age—is, although ingenious, so erroneous and fanciful, that a refutation of it will not be felt necessary by any intelligent reader. Fourth, the truly valuable part of the work of M. Buchez is that which treats of the aim, foundation, and methods of the science of history. It appears to be, on the whole, worthy of much commendation. And in this connection I may remark that no one can read M. Buchez's discussion of the question of method, without perceiving how groundless is the claim which Mr J. S. Mill has made on behalf of M. Comte in the following passage of his 'System of Logic': "The progressiveness of the human race is the foundation on which a method of philosophising in the social science has been of late years erected, far superior to either of the two modes which had previously been prevalent, the chemical or experimental, and the geometrical modes. This method, which is now generally adopted by the most advanced thinkers on the Con-

tinent, consists in attempting, by a study and analysis of the general facts of history, to discover (what these philosophers term) the law of progress; which law, once ascertained, must, according to them, enable us to predict future events, just as after a few terms of an infinite series in algebra we are able to detect the principle of regularity, and to predict the rest of the series to any number of terms we please. The principle aim of historical speculation in France, of late years, has been to ascertain this law. But while I gladly acknowledge the great services which have been rendered to historical knowledge by this school, I cannot but deem them to be mostly chargeable with a fundamental misconception of the true method of social philosophy. The misconception consists in supposing that the order of succession which we may be able to trace among the different states of society and civilisation which history presents to us, even if that order were more rigidly uniform than it has yet been proved to be, could ever amount to a law of nature. It can only be an empirical law. The succession of states of the human mind and of human society cannot have an independent law of its own; it must depend on the psychological and ethological laws which govern the action of circumstances on men and of men on circumstances. It is conceivable that those laws might be such, and the general circumstances of the human race such, as to determine the successive transformations of man and society to one given and unvarying order. But even if the case were so, it cannot be the ultimate aim of science to discover an empirical law. Until that law could be connected with the psychological and ethological laws on which it must depend, and, by the consilience of deduction *à priori* with historical evidence, could be converted from an empirical law into a scientific one, it could not be relied on for the prediction of future events, beyond, at most, strictly adjacent cases. M. Comte alone, among the new historical school, has seen the necessity of thus connecting all our generalisations from history with the laws of human nature."[1] This is a mistake. M. Comte has no exclusive right to such an honour, which may almost be

[1] Vol. ii. p. 509, 510; seventh edition.

described as the common property of the school to which he belongs. M. Buchez, in particular, saw the necessity referred to quite as clearly as M. Comte, and insisted on it, even in the first edition of his work, as fully and explicitly.

II.

Pierre Leroux was born at Paris in 1798. After having been first a mason and next a printer, he became a contributor to the 'Globe,' and with the other members of its staff helped to bring about the July Revolution of 1830. In that year he joined the Saint-Simonian school, and had influence enough to make the 'Globe' its organ; but the ideas of Enfantin on marriage and female messiahship forced him to secede before he had been two years in the society. He set himself, in consequence, the more earnestly to deepen and extend his knowledge, to examine the systems of philosophy which had acquired most reputation in the past or were enjoying it in the present, and to elaborate a social doctrine of his own. One result of these studies was a severe criticism of the principles of M. Cousin ('Réfutation de l'Éclecticisme'), which was very favourably received by all sections of the socialistic party. He was a most industrious publicist, and, between the years 1834 and 1848, edited or co-edited the 'Revue Encyclopédique,' the 'Encyclopédie Nouvelle,' the 'Revue Indépendante,' and the 'Revue Sociale,' and issued besides many books, of which it may suffice to name the following: (1) 'De l'Humanité,' 2 vols.; (2) 'Sept Discours sur la Situation Actuelle de la Société et de l'Esprit Humain;' (3) 'De la Doctrine de la Perfectibilité et du Progrès Continu;' (4) De l'Égalité, Essai Historique,' 2 vols.; (5) 'Du Christianisme et de son Origine Démocratique.' In virtue of these works he became the recognised founder of a form of socialism called humanitarianism, which was much the fashion in Paris for some years, and which had one persuasive prophet at least, Madame Georges Sand. The celebrity he had thus acquired, and the character of his political views, led to his being elected after the February Revolution of 1848 a member of the National Constituent Assembly; where, however, he was sadly out of his element,

and, it was affirmed, rather abused his position, by giving wearisome expositions of his system, and even reading chapters out of his own books, instead of speaking to the points under discussion, so that one day a member gravely moved that no books should be read at the tribune; and on another, when the subject of debate was Algeria, General Lamoricière, rising immediately after the philosopher, remarked that M. Leroux had taken them all through the histories of Greece and Rome, but had forgotten the Arabs, and he hoped the Assembly would allow him to endeavour to supply the omission, as the Arabs were somewhat interested in questions connected with Algeria. The personal inoffensiveness and even amiability of M. Leroux did not save him from being driven into exile by another turn of the wheel of fortune. The errors in a biographical sketch by De Mericourt led to his publishing in 1860 'Quelques Pages de Vérités,' which I regret not to have seen. He died at Paris in the sad and evil April of 1871.

The most important of his works is the 'De l'Humanité,' the first edition of which was published in 1840, and a second edition in 1845. It contains all that is essential in his social and historical theory, but the Refutation of Eclecticism may almost be considered as an introduction to it. He singled out eclecticism as an example of systems based on the psychological analysis of the individual consciousness, a process which he held could only lead to delusion, the individual consciousness or Ego being a mere abstraction, devoid of real existence. The fundamental error and weakness of the dominant philosophy, he thought, was forgetfulness of the fact that the individual mind only exists as a part of a whole, and can only be studied in the whole of which it is a part. The life of each man, he insisted, does not belong to him absolutely, and is not in him simply, but is in him and without him, through an incessant communication with his fellows and the universe: the thoughts, feelings, principles, beliefs of each man do not spring up originally in the individual mind, but are received as a part of the universal truth of mankind. The history of humanity, he maintained, is the direct object of philosophy, the true basis of the science of life. He took up, in fact, much the same attitude

towards the psychological method in philosophy as the writers of the theological school and M. Comte. Now we may grant that he had some reason for doing so, the psychological method having been often explained and applied in a narrow, one-sided, and deceptive way: we may grant, and I believe must grant, that the analysis of the individual consciousness requires to be both confirmed and supplemented by objective observation of various kinds; that the consciousness of the race and not of the individual is the true subject of mental science in all its branches; and that if it attempt, as it so often does at present, to proceed entirely from within, ignoring the combinations of human nature which are presented in history, literature, and language, and which ought to be employed as the materials of analysis and induction, it must inevitably fail;—and yet regard as the most fatal of all errors of method the endeavour to discover the laws of human nature by any process which has not psychological analysis as its basis and animating principle. No immediate or direct apprehension of the facts in which these laws are manifested is possible by any form of outward observation, since what is presented to outward observation is always mere movements of matter, not facts of human nature at all. As has been well said, "the external actions, speech, gestures, expressions of countenance of men, whether actually seen and heard or described in books, with or without the attribution of motives to them, would be entirely devoid of meaning, were it not for the subjective experience of such phenomena connected with certain feelings and motives in one's self. In reasoning about such phenomena without any such subjective experience, if it were possible to do so, we should be reasoning about unknown quantities, and our terms would have only the value of algebraic symbols, or a currency without purchasing power." In opposing one error of method, then, M. Leroux fell into another and greater error.

Passing from his method to his doctrine, I may remark, in the first place, that he rests his theory of human development on a definition of human nature. The only adequate definition of man, according to him, is, 'an animal transformed by reason, and united to humanity' ("un animal transformé par la raison,

et uni à l'humanité"). Man is not a mere animal—*i.e.*, a being endowed simply with sensation and sentiment, nor even an animal with reason, an animal *plus* reason; he is a unity of sensation, sentiment, and reason, and not a combination of them formed by mere addition. M. Leroux attaches the greatest importance to this proposition, and ascribes most of the failures of previous systems of political and historical philosophy to the denial or imperfect apprehension of it. Thus, he thinks, Plato saw in man only reason; Hobbes, only appetite; and Rousseau, only sentiment or will: and these three errors all naturally led to despotism as the ideal of social life; that of Plato to a theocracy, that of Hobbes to an absolute monarchy, and that of Rousseau to the unlimited subjection of the individual to the community. He (M. Leroux) believes himself to have been the first to apprehend what man is, at once in the unity and entirety of his nature, and so to have been the first to enter the path which leads to an adequate theory of historical development and social life.

Man is not only an animal transformed by reason, but "united to humanity." The end for which he is destined can only be known through a knowledge of the nature of humanity, and is, in fact, no other than the full development of entire humanity which constitutes progress, and in which the Eternal Essence and the Creative Principle of the universe reveals itself. M. Leroux is a firm believer in *continuous* progress. He discards the Saint-Simonian view of the alternation of organic and critical, constructive and destructive periods. He supposes that where intelligence may not be advancing the affections are growing, and that, in the course of generations, ideas are changed into faculties, which would remain although all the products of human reason were swept from the face of the earth by some great convulsion of nature; and that thus, notwithstanding many appearances to the contrary, there is everywhere, and always, progress.[1] He records what Bacon, Descartes, Pascal, Fontenelle, Herder, and others have done for this idea, and claims to crown their labours by what he calls

[1] See 'De l'Humanité,' l. i. ch. iv., and especially the essay, "De la Loi de Continuité," &c., in the Rev. Encyc., 1833.

the axiom of solidarity. It is a rather curious axiom, has extraordinary consequences, and probably needs much more exposition than I can afford to give it.[1]

It means that entire humanity is one vast society, of which all nations, tribes, communities, and men, are, in their several places and degrees, parts, which cannot attempt to separate from the other parts, and to isolate themselves, without violating reason and producing evil; but it means more—viz., that men are fragments or portions of an infinite and eternal Being, the all-present, all-pervading world-soul, and identical in essence; so that in seeing one man we see all other men, so that in seeing Peter we see also Paul, so that Confucius and Newton lived in one another no less than in themselves. It means that the men of the present are the very men who were in the past, and who will be in the future;[2] that a child born brings with it into the world only a soul which has already lived; that each of us reappears, after death, on the earth in the form of a child. The solidarity of men, as taught by M. Leroux, thus involves the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and represents humanity as a succession of generations, not of different individuals, but of the same individuals. Humanity is immortal, and so is each individual of which it is composed; but humanity has no destiny except on the earth, and the individual no destiny except in humanity. The individual carries with him into each new stage of existence no remembrance of what he experienced in anterior states. The remembrance of such experience, M. Leroux thinks, would be no boon, but an intolerable burden. Those who wish it are as foolish as the miser who desires to carry his gold with him when he dies. Memory is but a superficial property; it belongs not to our essential life. The old Greeks knew its character better than we, when they represented those who went into the under world as drinking out of Lethe, the river of for-

[1] It is explained at length in 'De l'Humanité,' l. iv. v.; while the whole of the second, and a considerable part of the first, volume of that work, is an attempt to prove that the ancients universally believed, more or less clearly, in the reappearance and revival of the individual in the race, of man in humanity.

[2] The title of ch. xii. l. 5e, 'De l'Humanité,' runs thus: "Nous sommes non seulement les fils et la posterité de ceux qui ont déjà vécu, mais au fond et réellement ces générations antérieures elles-mêmes."

getfulness. The slumber and oblivion of death are as refreshing and strengthening as those of nightly rest.[1]

It is obvious that the axiom of solidarity, as explained by M. Leroux, must tend to magnify the importance of the idea of progress. It seemed to himself to raise that idea to the rank of religious doctrine. And it certainly leaves no room for any other religious doctrines. It proves, if true, that no hopes or fears are warranted except those which are involved in the earthly destiny of collective humanity. All hopes and fears not thus warranted are now, according to the teaching of M. Leroux, unnecessary. Morality once needed the stimulus of everlasting reward, and the restraint of everlasting punishment, but faith in social progress is now sufficient. "There is no heaven or hell," cries our author: "the wicked will not be punished, nor the good rewarded; cease, mortals, to hope or fear. Humanity is an immortal tree, the branches of which wither and fall, one after another, but in doing so nourish the root in unfading youth."

The course of progress is described as a continuous advance towards equality. It is apprehended chiefly, if not entirely, in its negative aspect, as a deliverance from class distinctions, an abolition of unjust privileges. It has had three great stages, corresponding to the three chief forms of caste. In the first, the task of humanity was its self-deliverance from the slavery of the family, the patriarchal caste of the oriental world; in the second, from the despotism of the state, as exemplified in the political caste of Greece and Rome; and in the third, from the tyranny of property, and all the medieval privileges associated therewith. It is at the close of this third epoch that we are standing now; and, with a view to the reorganisation of society in the future, it specially behoves us to remember that the family, the state, and property, are all in themselves good, and that only when they assume the form, and involve the distinctions of caste, are they evil. "Tout le mal du genre humain vient des castes. La famille est un bien, la famille caste est un

[1] M. Leroux devotes three chapters to repel the objection to his doctrine, drawn from the fact that men have no remembrance of their pre-existence, and to maintain that the want of such remembrance is more than supplied by latent or innate powers, and new conditions of existence.—L. v. c. xiii.-xv.

mal; la patrie est un bien, la patrie caste est un mal; la propriété est un bien, la propriété caste est un mal." Future progress must lie in rejecting the evil but retaining and organising the good, alike in the family, the state, and property. Especially is organisation of the good needed in the period of history at which we have arrived. The equality of all men before the law has come to be recognised. The greatest of revolutions, the French Revolution of 1789, established it as a principle, and so inaugurated a new and better era of history. The new form of society, however, is not yet constituted, although its principle has been found. The generation in which we live is one without faith, law, or system. The old order is broken down, but the new has not been built up.[1]

[1] The theory of M. Leroux regarding the historical evolution of humanity and its stages will be found in the preface, and second and third books, of 'L'Humanité,' but more fully in the 'Essai sur l'Égalité.'

CHAPTER XII.

AUGUSTE COMTE.

THE story of the life of Auguste Comte, the founder of the so-called positivist school of philosophy, has been so often told, and is in its outlines at least so generally known, that I shall not repeat it here even in the briefest form. Let it suffice to indicate below where abundant information may be obtained on the subject.[1] His general philosophy has given rise to so many and diverse judgments, ranging between the extremes of idolatrous adulation and the most scornful compassion, that I have no wish to add another to their number without having ample space and time to state and vindicate it.[2] Of his works, these two may be said to contain the whole thinking of his life—the 'Cours de Philosophie Positive' (6 vols., 1830-42) and the 'Système de Politique Positive' (4 vols., 1851-54). The last

[1] M. Littré's 'Auguste Comte et la Philosophie Positive;' Dr Robinet's 'Notice sur les Travaux et la Vie d'Auguste Comte;' the sketch by Mr Lewes in the third edition of his 'History of Philosophy;' and an article by Principal Tulloch in the 'Edinburgh Review,' No. cclx., April 1868.

[2] In addition to Comte's own works, among the writings most worthy of being consulted regarding his system as a whole, are those of M. Littré, Mr Lewes, and Principal Tulloch, mentioned in the preceding note, 'Comte's Philosophy of the Sciences,' by Mr Lewes; 'Auguste Comte and Positivism,' by Mr J. S. Mill; 'The Unity of Comte's Life and Doctrine,' by Dr Bridges; Mr Herbert Spencer's Essays on 'The Genesis of the Sciences;' Dr Whewell's 'Comte and Positivism' (Macmillan's Magazine, March 1866); Mr Henderson's 'Positivism' ('North British Review,' September 1868); Professor Huxley's 'Scientific Aspects of Positivism' (Fortnightly Review, June 1869); Dr Hutchison Stirling's 'Why the History of Philosophy ends with Hegel and not with Comte,' in his 'Supplementary Notes to Schwegler's Handbook of the History of Philosophy;' 'Paroles de Philosophie Positive,' by M. Littré; 'Exposition de la Philosophie Positive,' by M. Celestin de Blignières; the 'Essai Critique sur la Philosophie Positive,' by M. Charles Pellarin; and the 'Lehren und Schriften Auguste Comte's,' by Carl Twesten, in the Preussische Jahrbücher, B^d. iv.

three volumes of the former work—the volumes which appeared in 1839, 1841, and 1842—present us with his historical philosophy in its best form. The first of these three volumes—the fourth volume of the work—insists on the necessity and importance of the new science of Social Physics; describes the principal attempts which had been made to constitute it; indicates the characteristics of the positive method in its application to social phenomena, and the relation of the Social Science to the other positive sciences; divides Social Physics into Social Statics and Social Dynamics, and gives an outline of the theory of the former. The fifth volume expounds the general theory of Social Dynamics, and treats fully of the first two stages of historical evolution—the theological and metaphysical. The sixth volume deals with the third or positive stage, and concludes with an attempt at a comprehensive estimate of the positive philosophy in its method, doctrines, influences, and results. Although the whole of the 'Système de Politique Positive' may be said to concern in some degree the student of the philosophy of history, he will not, perhaps, find in it very much of value which he has not already met with in the earlier work. What is new, so far at least as regards views on the course of history, are mainly speculations as to the future, which few persons will be inclined to rank higher than improbable conjectures. Probably the essays contained in the Appendix to the fourth volume, but originally published at various dates between 1819 and 1828 form the most interesting portion of the Système. In that published in 1822, Comte is found to have already made what he regarded as his great discovery of the law of three stages.

M. Comte made in his philosophy a strenuous effort to elaborate a doctrine so complete and comprehensive that it should embrace all knowledge and action. What he endeavoured to do was not to discover special subordinate laws, not to expound isolated ideas however excellent, not to establish in any department of study truths of detail; but to construct a system of thought so wide and well arranged, that not only every science, but every large scientific generalisation and every great social force, would have its proper place assigned it and full justice done it,—a system in which nothing should be arbitrary, but

everything determined by three closely connected laws, proved by the concurrent application of deduction and induction, the law of historical filiation, the law of hierarchical generalisation, and the law of practical activity.

In this general doctrine or system the philosophy of history ranks not as itself a science, but as the division of a science—as the second part of Sociology, the last of the sciences. Sociology is divided into Social Statics and Social Dynamics, and it is the latter which is the Philosophy of History. Social Statics is the theory of the spontaneous order of human society, and Social Dynamics the theory of the natural progress of human society; the one exhibits the conditions of the social existence of the individual, the family, and the species, and the other the course of human development. It is essential, Comte insists, to regard these two theories as supplementary or complementary of each other. The ideas of order and progress correspond in sociology to the ideas of organisation and life in biology, and are as rigorously inseparable. The combination of them is the grand difficulty of the science, but of primary importance. It was because he thought he had succeeded in combining them that Comte claimed to be the founder of sociology. He admitted that Aristotle had almost wrought out the theory of social order, and that for nearly a century that of progress had been receiving a continuous elaboration; but held, notwithstanding, that order and progress had never been exhibited in their true relationship, but, on the contrary, set in radical opposition to each other: and his own view of his position as a speculator on society was that, standing between two extremes of hitherto antagonistic opinion, he could not merely effect a make-shift compromise between them like the eclectics or doctrinaires, but could establish on a truly scientific foundation a doctrine which would definitely settle the strife between the advocates of order and of progress, and help to settle the wider and deeper strife in society itself, of which that was but the expression in speculation. He flattered himself that his theory of society contained all of truth that had been said on behalf of order by the reactionary school, and all of truth that had been said on behalf of progress by the revolutionary school, while so reconciling the claims and ex-

hibiting the relationship of order and progress, that order would henceforth be seen to be the basis of progress, and progress to be the development of order. Whether he has been as successful in attaining the golden mean as he fancied, or whether he has failed, and if so, in what direction and to what extent, are points on which readers will differ according to their own political convictions. In various particulars his theory of social statics seems to me eminently judicious, where to Mr Mill, his most distinguished English disciple, it appears to be distressingly conservative; while, even according to my judgment, Comte has not held the balance justly poised, but has thrown more weight into the scale of social authority, and given less to that of individual independence, than is due. His sympathies certainly were more with the reaction than with the Revolution. He speaks with an enthusiastic recognition of the services rendered by the representatives of the former, which he never manifests, except in the case of Condorcet, towards those of the latter. He thought revolutionary ideas had somewhat overdone their work, that pulling down had gone farther than was needed, and that construction was worthy of much more praise.

Comte looked on history from a point of view in some respects not unlike that of Hegel, and his opinions coincided with those of Hegel on a number of social questions. Hence some have thought that he may have been influenced by Hegel, or even have borrowed from him. Dr Stirling, for example, collects from Mr Mill's summary of Comte's doctrine several statements which he pronounces "Hegelian indications," eminently "Hegelian traits," "Hegelian analogies;" and Principal Tulloch writes as follows: "Other thinkers before Comte had conceived of human society as regulated by natural laws, and so presenting throughout its course a great plan of development. It cannot be said that even here he is entirely original. Not to speak of Montesquieu and Condorcet, to whose labours he himself does justice, M. Littré has cited a remarkable passage from Kant, in which the idea of human history as a connected chain of events, and of human society as a vast organism governed by its own laws, is expressed with great clearness and force. The same views were worked out with still greater power and success by

Hegel, from whom we cannot but think that Comte borrowed many of his ideas." I must entirely dissent from the opinion expressed by the learned Principal in the concluding words of this citation. That Comte borrowed from Hegel is a conjecture not only unsupported, but opposed, by facts. It is true that in 1824 his friend M. d'Eichtal sent him from Berlin a translation which he had made for him of Kant's short essay, "Idea of a Universal History," and some brief extract, clearly not made with much intelligence, from some work of Hegel; but in 1824 he had already discovered his sociological laws, and his political convictions were definitively formed. In his reply to M. d'Eichtal[1] he expresses the liveliest admiration of Kant's treatise[2], pronounces Hegel "un homme de merite," thinks he might perhaps be made use of to spread positivism in Germany, and hopes to be informed further about his teaching,—a hope which was never realised, as M. d'Eichtal went over to Saint-Simonianism, the result of which was "a rupture" between him and Comte. M. Comte remained to the last ignorant of German philosophy. In 1843 he consulted Mr Mill as to the advisability of making some general acquaintance with German philosophical doctrines, but, on being dissuaded, abandoned the idea.[3] Further, any coincidences which have been pointed out between the views of Comte and Hegel are of such a nature as would not, although multiplied fifty-fold, prove in the least that the former had borrowed from the latter. They regard views of which Hegel was neither the author nor the sole proprietor, which he only shared with hundreds of other thinkers, and which were current in the catholic and socialistic medium in

[1] Littré—Auguste Comte, p. 155-157.

[2] Comte read so little that it is not strange he should have been ignorant of the fact that Kant's essay had been translated into French twenty-three years before; but it does surprise us to find that M. Littré, after it has been translated, condensed, or summarised at least a dozen times, and been referred to in almost every account, however brief, of the notion of progress, should translate it again as "inconnu en France." Not less wonderful is it that he should suppose it had been left to him to discover Turgot's anticipation of the law of the three states. That discovery was made by M. Buchez shortly after Comte's earliest enunciation of his law. M. Littré is a man of great ability and merit, and, in certain departments, of great erudition; but he has added nothing to our knowledge of the history of Comte's leading ideas.

[3] Littré—Auguste Comte, p. 446, 447.

which Comte lived. Why label as "Hegelian" what were commonplaces among the adherents of socialism and the theological reaction? Why suppose Comte to have derived from a distance opinions which were floating in the intellectual atmosphere around him, and to be had for the inbreathing? Comte was thoroughly French; the direct and immediate influences which moulded his life and doctrine were exclusively French.[1]

The position of Comte in relation to the revolutionary and reactionary school of thought explains much both of his strength and weakness, of his merits and defects, as an historical speculator. In the first place, it enabled him to start with a more than usually consistent and comprehensive conception of progress,—one which, while accepting the previous elaboration of that conception as a whole, added, by defining it as the development of order and prefacing it with an investigation into the conditions of order, a good deal that had been hitherto left out—viz., that it must not only never violate but always involve the

[1] I cannot admit that there is any truth in the following remarks of Mr Morell, which have been, I regret to observe, quoted with approval both by Professor Ferrier and Dr Stirling: "The influence of Schelling was not confined to Germany. His attempt to unite the process of the physical sciences in one affiliated line with the study of man, both in his individual constitution and historic development, has also had a very considerable result out of his own country. No one, for example, who compares the philosophic method of Schelling with the 'Philosophie Positive' of Auguste Comte, can have the slightest hesitation as to the source from which the latter virtually sprang. The fundamental idea is, indeed, precisely the same as that of Schelling, with this difference only, that the idealistic language of the German speculator is here translated into the more ordinary language of physical science. That Comte borrowed his views from Schelling we can by no means affirm; but that the whole conception of the affiliation of the sciences, in the order of their relative simplicity, and the expansion of the same law of development so as to include the exposition of human nature and the course of social progress, is all to be found there, no one in the smallest degree acquainted with Schelling's writings can seriously doubt." Now, in all probability Comte never read a single page of Schelling even in a translation. But apart from this, and still more decisive against Mr Morell's supposition, is the fact that the Comtist classification of the sciences has really nothing in common with the philosophy of Schelling. What Mr Morell refers to is entirely distinct from it, is really no classification of the sciences at all, and proceeds on a principle utterly antagonistic to that of Comte, on the principle not of an intelligent methodical study of phenomena, but of the self-movement or potentiation of the absolute from the lowest manifestations of what is called matter to the highest activity of reason. It is quite illusory to compare the successive "potences" of Schelling with the fundamental sciences of Comte.

principles of social stability, personal morality, a naturally regulated family life, and subordination to organised authority in the state. His conception of progress necessarily led him to test the character of all social changes by their influence on these the fundamental principles of moral and social existence. That was certainly an advantage. It may be that the conception of social order is not a simpler or clearer conception than that of social progress; but, be it simple or complex, clear or obscure, we must have some tolerable understanding of what order is before our notions about progress can be of much worth.

Then, again, his sympathies with the reaction enabled him to judge several of the great social institutions of the past, and especially of the middle ages, with a spirit of fairness strikingly in contrast with the spirit of sectarian bitterness displayed by the deists and atheists of the Revolution. The claim has been put in for him that he was the first worthily to appreciate the middle age. It is a claim, I need scarcely say, which cannot be seriously maintained; and he himself expressly ascribes the honour to those to whom it was more due, the theological school, the reaction of which, however, in this as in other respects, was but a sign of a general change in the current of European thought, which began in Germany, and only reached France after having passed through England. Although any such claim, however, be absurd, and although it be strange that, after Thierry's celebrated account of the rise and spread in France of correct views as to the middle ages, any such claim should have been made, yet Comte is entitled to the honour of having estimated their character and significance on the whole well, and even in some respects better than any of his predecessors. The medieval Church, feudalism, and scholasticism, are appreciated in their general relations and influences with comprehensiveness and truthfulness; and, in fact, all the great systems of speculation and religion belonging to Western Europe down to the Reformation are judged of, so far as they can be regarded merely as historical phenomena, with a fairness and insight surprising in a man whose own views as to speculation and religion were so peculiar. I wish this, however, to be understood as merely a general judgment, and as not inconsistent

with the conviction that even in his analysis of medieval society there are great errors and some gross blunders. But while some of the mistakes as to fact can only be accounted for by the abstinence from reading which he imposed upon himself, under the name of cerebral hygiene, as "necessary to elevate the views and give impartiality to the sentiments," his errors of judgment are mainly due to excess of sympathy with the character and ideal of medieval society.

It is quite otherwise as to the chief forces and institutions peculiar to modern history. These M. Comte seldom looks on with an impartial or favourable eye. He is, for example, unjust to the philosophy of the eighteenth century, most unjust to Protestantism, seeing both only on their negative side, and regarding them as stages of a merely critical and destructive movement. There was a great deal more to see in both than that. The philosophy of the eighteenth century had great faults and disastrous consequences; but it was no mere negation; nor is its work so completely over that it can henceforth be safely dismissed from consideration, as is perhaps sufficiently apparent from the single fact that the two writers who have done most in France since Comte in the same province of research, Quinet and Laurent, are both men saturated with the distinctive ideas and feelings of that philosophy,—ideas and feelings, indeed, which it did not absolutely originate, but which it signally promoted, and which it transmitted to us, and which will never pass away. While as to Protestantism, if it rejected and discarded much, it was in the interest of truths displaced, disfigured, and almost extinguished by what it renounced; and if it insisted on the rights of reason, it equally insisted on the claims of spiritual authority, of the Divine Will made known in the Divine Word.

It is, further, necessary to remark that Comte did not look upon history from a purely scientific point of view. He was influenced in his whole treatment of it by practical interests. From the outset of his career as an author, his mind was possessed and ruled by the fundamental principles of socialism. What was the chief end of life to Saint-Simon became also his—viz., the reorganisation of society through the establishment of

a "new spiritual power" capable of giving unity and direction to opinion and action. This aim he gave clear expression to in his early essays, and it permeates and modifies the entire system of his positive philosophy, but especially that part of it which explains the historical evolution of humanity. The judgments he passes on institutions have a double reference, one to what has been, another to what he has decided ought to be and will be in the future. Thus the grounds of his extremely favourable estimate of medieval Catholicism were not merely certain considerations, partly sentimental and partly historical in their nature, but, still more, the belief that although the Catholic doctrine, like every other theological doctrine, was to be rejected, the Catholic organisation was to be retained and extended by positivism, with such modifications as the substitution of a scientific for a theological creed might render necessary. And his aversion to Protestantism and modern philosophy had for one main reason the fact that they had broken up the external unity of the Catholic or medieval form of social organisation, and were hostile to its restoration.

But now let us proceed to the statement and examination of what Comte regarded, and what his disciples regard, as the fundamental law of historical evolution, the so-called law of the three states. It is the *nœud essentiel* at once of Comte's philosophy of history and of his general philosophy. The three states are the successive stages through which the mind of man in nations, individuals, and each distinct order of conceptions, is maintained to pass in the course of its history. The first state is the theological. Before either metaphysics or science, there is religion. That goes back as far as history will take us. There is reason to believe it coeval with man. In this state the facts and events of the universe are attributed to supernatural volitions, to the agency of beings or a being adored as divine. The lowest and earliest form of this stage is Fetichism, in which man conceives of all external bodies as endowed with a life analogous to his own. Astrolatry is a connecting link between Fetichism and Polytheism, there being a generality about the stars which, connected with their other characteristics, fits them to be common fetiches. Polytheism is directly derived from Fetichism,

and it is the second stage or phase of the theological state. It is either conservative and theocratic as that of Egypt, or progressive and military as those of Greece and Rome, the one of which was of an intellectual, and the other of a social type. It gradually concentrates itself into Monotheism, which, growing out of different forms of polytheism, is of different kinds. Thus the monotheism of the Jews differs from that of Europe, because evolved out of a conservative instead of a progressive polytheism. The contact of these gave rise to Christianity, which culminated in Catholicism, the last and highest type of monotheistic development. With it the long infancy of human thought terminates. The metaphysical spirit, which has been operative in some degree almost through the whole theological period, bringing about even the transition from fetichism to polytheism, and still more from polytheism to monotheism, and which has been constantly growing in strength, now, as there is nothing beyond monotheism but a total issue from theology, throws theology off altogether and establishes a metaphysical state. Theology dies, and the intellect of humanity which has passed away from it embodies itself in another form. In this second state, for supernatural agents abstract forces are substituted. Phenomena are supposed to be due to causes and essences inherent in things. First causes and final causes, these are what the mind in this state longs and strives to know, but in vain; and it begins slowly and gradually to recognise in one sphere of nature after another that a knowledge of these is unattainable to it; and so it reaches a third and final state, that of positive science. In this state the mind surrenders the illusions of its infancy and youth, ceases to fancy that it can transcend nature, or know either the first cause or the end of the universe, or ascertain about things more than experience can tell us of their properties and their relations of coexistence and succession. It is a state of learned ignorance, in which intelligence sees clearly and sharply its own limits, and confines itself within them. Within these limits lie all the positive sciences; beyond them theology and metaphysics.

Now, there is, I think, a certain measure of truth in this alleged law. There are three ways of looking at things,—a reli-

gious, a metaphysical, and a scientific. It is natural for the mind to believe that things and the successions of things tell something about a power in or beyond them with faculties analogous to those which itself possesses. It is natural for it also to speculate on the reason and mode of the existence of things, and to ask a number of questions about them which cannot be immediately answered from observation of their properties and ascertainment of their relations of coexistence and succession. It is natural for it no less to observe these properties and study these relations. It is natural for it to do all three, and even all three about the same things; in other words, things may be looked at in three aspects. But three aspects are not three successive states. From the fact that it is natural for the mind to look at things in all these three ways, it in no wise follows that it is necessary or even natural to look at them one after another. Nay, just because it is so natural to look at things in all these three ways, it is not natural to suppose that the one mode will be exhausted, gone through, before the other is entered on, but that they will be simultaneous in origin and parallel in development; or at least that the religious and positive will be so, however the metaphysical, as, so to speak, the least natural and imperative, may lag somewhat behind them.

Now, what say the facts? Comte believes that man started with a religion. He attempts a refutation of those who supposed a state prior to all religion, even to fetichism. But, I ask, had man no positive conceptions even then? Did he live by fetichism alone? How could he build a hut, or cook his food, or shoot with precision, otherwise than by attention to the physical properties and relations of things? Without some conceptions identical in kind, however different in degree, with the latest discoveries of positive science, life were impossible. Positive conceptions, then, instead of only beginning in modern times, began with the beginning of human history. And they have been increasing and growing all through it. True generalisations as to the physical properties and relations of things were multiplied and widened by one generation after another in the so-called theological and metaphysical states. Then, as to metaphysics, according to Comte's own account, it pervaded

almost the whole theological state. Fetichism passed into polytheism, and polytheism into monotheism, from the impulse of the metaphysical spirit, and under the influence of metaphysical conceptions. And Comte, however inconsistent, is here obviously quite correct. Nothing has so powerfully affected theological development as speculative philosophy; and that such philosophy may flourish at a comparatively early stage of theological development, ancient India and Greece, with their marvellously subtle metaphysics coexisting with the most imaginative of polytheisms, are surely indubitable proofs.

Now, what does this amount to? Why, that Comte has mistaken three coexistent stages for three successive states of thought, three aspects of things for three epochs of time. Theology, metaphysics, and positive science, instead of following only one after another, each constituting an epoch, have each pervaded all epochs,—have coexisted from the earliest time to the present day. There has been no passing away of any one of them. History cannot be invoked to show that theology and metaphysics are purely of her domain, merely preparatory for positive science, stages in the interpretation of nature through which the mind required to pass from infancy to maturity. History certifies, on the contrary, that positive science and they began at the same time, that they and it have developed together through all history, and still continue to exist together. Her own birth and theirs were simultaneous, and she has not yet had to record the death of any of them.

But it is said science has been continually gaining, theology and metaphysics continually losing, ground; science has been gradually expelling both theology and metaphysics from one region of knowledge after another, until they will soon have no foot of ground to stand on. I ask, however, for proof of this assertion, and not only cannot find it, but feel confident it cannot be found. There is, indeed, a fact which, confusedly apprehended, has given a certain degree of plausibility to it; but this same fact, correctly apprehended, is really its refutation. The fact I refer to is, that in the early history of the race the three leading aspects of things are not clearly distinguished. Theological, metaphysical, and positive conceptions are commingled—their

developments thoroughly entangled; often so commingled and entangled that it is impossible to determine whether they would be better described as bad theology, bad metaphysics, or bad science, being really all three. But the effect of progress here, as everywhere, is differentiation, the increasing separation of things really and properly distinct, the inclusion of all within their own spheres, and consequent exclusion from those of others. Theology is driven more and more out of metaphysics and physics; metaphysics out of theology and physics; and physics no less out of metaphysics and theology.

Comte says fetichism is the first and lowest stage of human development. What, then, precisely, is fetichism? Just the chaotic union of theological, metaphysical, and positive thought. It may be described equally well either as a physical theology or a theological physics, and it is at the same time obviously a metaphysics, an attribution of vital essences and personal causes as inherent in inanimate things. But thought has come out of this chaos, and how? By the continuous evolution of all the three orders of conceptions, by an ever-growing comprehensiveness and distinctness of vision as to the proper spheres of all three. Each has been gradually emancipating itself from the interference and control of the others. It is not more true that physics began with being theological and metaphysical, than that metaphysics began with being physical and theological, and theology with being physical and metaphysical. The law of the three stages is to about the same extent true of all the three developments, only, of course, the arrangement of the stages is different in each. It is only in a very general way that it is true of any of them, and in such a way it is, with the necessary change of terms, true of all.

I have no objection, then, to admit that in a very general way the so-called Comtist law of the three stages is true of most orders of properly positive conceptions; and I should hold as strongly as Comte himself that every order of properly positive conceptions ought to be freed from the interference and intermixture either of theology or metaphysics. The confusion of either with positive science is illegitimate and mischievous; and the expulsion of them from a domain which is foreign to

them must be beneficial to them no less than to the science whose rightful province it is. Now, it is only this sort of expulsion, and the restriction consequent on it, which history shows them ever to have met with. In every other way, each advance of science, instead of being a limitation of either, has been an extension of both. So far from metaphysics and theology having been driven from any region of nature by science, no science has arisen without suggesting new questions to the one and affording new data to the other. Each new science brings with it principles which the metaphysician finds it requisite to submit to an analytic examination, and in which he finds new materials for speculation; and also, in the measure of its success, results in which the theologian finds some fresh disclosure of the thoughts and character of God. Underneath all science there is metaphysics, above all science there is theology; and these three are so related that every advance of science must extend the spheres both of true metaphysics and true theology. Comte has failed entirely to prove that theology and metaphysics are mere passing phases of thought, illusions of the infancy and youth of humanity, which have no sphere of reality corresponding to them. The testimony of history is all the other way; it gives assurance that they have always been, and grounds of hope that they will always be; that they represent real aspects of existence, and respond to eternal aspirations in the human heart.

My reason for holding it true only in a very general way, or, in other words, only very partially true, that positive science has passed through a theological and metaphysical state, must be obvious from what has been already said. There must have been some conceptions positive from the first. It is impossible to conceive of an exclusively theological cooking, hunting, or hut-building; for although many tribes of savage men believe that food and fire, bows and arrows, &c., have souls, they must none the less attend to the positive properties of these things in order to make use of them. There are other conceptions which, although they may or must have been late in being discovered, must yet have been at their discovery apprehended as positive. It is most improbable that either arithmetical

or geometrical truths were first apprehended as either theological or metaphysical. It is true that even arithmetical and geometrical truths have been theologically and metaphysically regarded, as by Laotseu, the Pythagoreans, and Eleatics; but in these cases the theology and metaphysics were by subtle efforts of speculative ingenuity associated with, grafted on, positive conceptions. In mathematics, the positive stage is the first, and spontaneous, and only natural stage.

This is so obvious that Comte and his disciples have been unable altogether to ignore it; yet they have, notwithstanding, adhered to their law as if it were unaffected by such facts. A more inconsistent and futile expedient could not be imagined. By having recourse to it they have exposed themselves to the charge of the crassest ignorance of what is meant by a law of nature. A law which does not apply to a class of phenomena is surely not the law of these phenomena; and even a so-called law, which only *sometimes* or *in part* applies to a class of phenomena, can surely be no true law. The most elementary notion of a law of nature is a rule *without exceptions*—a *uniformity* of connection among coexistent or successive facts. And yet Comte, although maintaining his law of the three states, three mutually exclusive phases of thought, to be *the* law of historical evolution, an invariable and necessary law, can write thus: "Properly speaking, the theological philosophy, even in the earliest infancy of the individual and society, has never been strictly universal. That is, the simplest and commonest facts in all classes of phenomena have always been supposed subject to natural laws, and not ascribed to the arbitrary will of supernatural agents. The illustrious Adam Smith has, for example, made the very felicitous remark, that there was to be found in no age or country a god of weight. And even in more complicated cases the presence of law may be recognised whenever the phenomena are so elementary and familiar that the perfect invariability of their relationships of occurrence cannot fail to strike even the least educated observer. As to things moral and social, which some would foolishly exclude from the sphere of positive philosophy, there has necessarily always been a belief in natural laws with regard to the simpler phenomena of daily

life,—a belief implied in the conduct of the ordinary affairs of existence,—since all foresight would be impossible on the supposition that every incident was due to supernatural agency, and in that case prayer would be the only conceivable means of influencing the course of human actions. It is even noticeable that the principle of the theological philosophy itself lies in the transference to the phenomena of external nature of the first beginnings of the laws of human action; and thus the germ of the positive philosophy is at least as primitive as that of the theological philosophy itself, though it could not expand till a much later time. This idea is very important to the perfect rationality of our sociological theory; because, as human life can never present any real creation, but only a gradual evolution, the final spread of the positive spirit would be scientifically incomprehensible, if we could not trace its rudiments from the very beginning."[1]

I consider these remarks excellent, but excellent as a proof that there is no such law as the so-called law of three states. If they be true, as I have no doubt they are, it cannot possibly be in any recognised or proper sense of the term *the* law, the fundamental law of history; it can at the most be only the law of some historical phenomena which Comte should have carefully discriminated from other phenomena, in order not to impose on himself and his readers a secondary and special in place of a primary and general law. If true, he was logically bound entirely to recast his statement of his supposed law, and to acknowledge that, if a law at all, it was by no means one so important as he had at first imagined. He failed to take this course, and involved himself, in consequence, in obvious self-contradictions on which I need not insist, as they have been clearly pointed out by Professor Huxley, who, so far as I am aware, has not been answered. In view of his own procedure, M. Comte had some interest in warning, as he did, thinkers against inquiring "too closely" into the exact truth of scientific laws, and in pronouncing worthy of "severe reprobation" those who break down "by too minute an investigation" generalisations which they cannot replace.

[1] Phil. Pos., iv. 491.

It speaks ill for M. Comte's "law" that men like Mr Mill and M. Littré have had to deal with it in the same way. Mr Mill writes: "Mathematics, from the very beginning of its cultivation, can hardly at any time have been in the theological state, though exhibiting many traces of the metaphysical. No one, probably, ever believed that the will of a god kept parallel lines from meeting, or made two and two equal to four; or ever prayed to the gods to make the square of the hypothenuse equal to more or less than the sum of the squares of the sides. The most devout believers have recognised in propositions of this description, a class of truths independent of the divine omnipotence. Even among the truths which popular philosophy calls by the misleading name of Contingent, the few which are at once exact and obvious were probably, from the very first, excepted from the theological explanation. M. Comte observes, after Adam Smith, that we are not told in any age or country of a god of weight" (p. 47, 48). "There never can have been a period in any science when it was not in some degree positive, since it always professed to draw conclusions from experience and observation" (p. 51). And yet Mr Mill fully accepts, as amply proved deductively and inductively, the law of the three states, and tells us that it must be passed through by "every distinct class of human conceptions" (p. 12), by "all human speculation" (p. 32), by "all the sciences" (p. 47), without apparently the slightest suspicion either of self-contradiction, or of breaking what he himself calls "the backbone of Comte's philosophy."

The procedure of M. Littré is still more curious. In his 'Paroles,' published in 1860, he maintained that although the law of the three states must be held to be a true law, the discovery of which had founded sociology, it was only an empirical law, a mere general statement of historical fact; and accordingly, he proposed to substitute for it a law of four states, as at once of a deeper and more comprehensive character, as inclusive of Comte's law, and entitled, in consequence of explaining the development of humanity by the development of the individual mind, to the designation of rational. In his much more important work 'Auguste Comte,' published three

years later, he confessed to have discovered in the interval that a law very similar to that which he had proposed had been enunciated so far back as 1808 by Saint-Simon. Still maintaining, however, the great importance and substantial originality of his own conception, he not only adhered to his criticism of the Comtian law, but greatly extended it. He denied that that law applied to the development of industry, morality, or art; affirmed that it held true only of the development of science. "Cette critique," are his own words, "je la maintiens; pourtant je ne voudrais pas qu'on se meprît et qu'on crût que je rejette la loi des trois états. Je ne la rejette point, je la restreins. Tant que l'on se tient dans l'ordre scientifique et que l'on considère la conception du monde d'abord theologique, puis métaphysique, finalement positive, la loi des trois états a sa pleine efficacité pour diriger les spéculations de l'histoire. . . . Mais, en histoire, tout n'est pas renfermé dans l'ordre scientifique. M. Comte, qui a dit quelque part qu'il fallait bien supposer quelques notions qui ne fussent ni théologiques ni métaphysiques, a indiqué le germe, je ne dirai pas de mon objection, mais de ma restriction. En effet cette loi des trois états ne comprend ni le développement industriel, ni le développement moral, ni le développement esthetique."[1]

As a critic of the historical philosophy of M. Comte, I cannot pass unnoticed these views of the most eminent of his disciples in France. And I would remark, first, that M. Comte certainly believed his own alleged law to be not merely empirical but rational, in the only sense in which the word rational can, according to the positive philosophy, be legitimately used in connection with law. He maintained the law of three states to be not merely empirical but rational, in the same sense in which M. Littré maintains the law of four states which he would substitute for it to be rational. Both writers alike deny that law can be rational in the sense of being traceable to power, force, efficient causality—of being anything deeper than, or different from, a uniform relation of sequence or resemblance between phenomena; and both alike affirm not only that laws may be rational in the sense of being deducible and deduced from

[1] Auguste Comte, 49, 50.

wider laws as well as empirically ascertained by an induction of instances, but that those laws which they pronounce to be the fundamental laws of social evolution are in that sense actually rational. M. Comte has explicitly, repeatedly, and elaborately argued that the law of the three states can be reached by deduction no less than by induction, and is not merely a description of the ascertained course of human events, a general statement of historical fact, but a law of which the *a priori* reason is known, and which is the expression not simply of what has happened, but of what from the very nature of the human mind must have happened. In contrasting the law of the three states with a law of four states as an empirical with a rational law, M. Littré has overlooked both the direct claims made by M. Comte on behalf of the first-mentioned law, and the numerous passages in which he attempted to assign its logical, moral, and social grounds. M. Comte may have failed in proving his so-called law to be rationally or philosophically necessary, but he certainly took a vastly greater amount of trouble in endeavouring to do so than M. Littré has as yet taken in connection with the alleged law of four states. I cannot but think, therefore, that had the former lived to read what the latter has written in this connection, he might with good reason have complained of being unfairly dealt with, and I have no doubt that he would have complained somewhat loudly.

Then, in the second place, M. Littré overlooks, and indeed virtually denies, truth of the utmost importance, of which M. Comte had the merit of clearly seeing and clearly stating the value. The founder of positivism showed himself perfectly aware that the intellectual development was not the only development in history. He not only knew that there was an industrial development, a moral development, and an æsthetic development, as well as an intellectual development, but he traced their courses with much care, and, as it seems to me, with no inconsiderable success. He saw, however, something more, without which no philosophy of history is conceivable, yet which M. Littré has not seen. He saw that there must be a general historical development inclusive of these particular developments, and that the particular developments must be

not mere stages of the general development, but movements pervasive of it from beginning to end, and parallel to one another. He saw that the elements of the social evolution are throughout connected and always acting on one another. Surely that is a truth which cannot be seriously contested. It is certain that Comte regarded it as an indispensable presupposition to the construction of a philosophy of history. He could not have failed to be astounded at any one who denied it fancying he nevertheless accepted his philosophy of history on the whole. Such is, however, the position taken up by M. Littré, when he maintains that the law of the three states regulates only the intellectual, or, as he calls it, the scientific development; and that expressly on the ground that the industrial, moral, and æsthetic developments are separate from and antecedent to the intellectual development, instead of being, as Comte so strongly insisted, dependent on, correspondent to, and contemporaneous with it. To me Littré seems utterly wrong, and Comte thoroughly right.

Comte had a clear recognition of the truth that the special developments of human activity are not successive epochs of history. Littré's distinctive theory proceeds entirely on the error that that is precisely what they are. This is his statement of the law which he imagines to comprehend and supplement the law of Comte: "Il me semble que l'histoire se partage en quatre âges fondamentaux: le plus ancien est celui où l'humanité est sous l'empire prépondérant des besoins; le plus ancien ensuite, ou âge des religions, est celui où la morale, se developpant, suscite les premières créations civiles et religieuses; le troisième, ou âge de l'art, est celui où le sens du beau, devenu à son tour, capable de satisfactions, enfante les constructions et les poëmes; enfin, le quatrième, ou âge de la science, est celui où la raison, cessant d'être employée exclusivement à l'accomplissement des trois fonctions précédantes, travaille pour elle-même et procède à la recherche de la vérité abstraite." Certainly this is remarkably similar to what Saint-Simon had written half a century earlier, when he maintained that the development both of the race and of the individual might be divided into four stages—viz., 1st, Infancy, characterised by de-

light in construction and handiwork; 2d, Puberty, characterised by artistic aspirations; 3d, Manhood, characterised by military ambition; and Age, characterised by the love of science. Of course, M. Littré has endeavoured to show that his law is much superior to that proposed by M. Saint-Simon. But it seems to me that there is very little indeed to choose between them. They are both so bad that it would be mere labour lost to try to ascertain which is best or worst. And the exceeding badness of both is due to their implicit contradiction of the truth which Comte had the wisdom to lay down as the very corner-stone of his historical philosophy.

It was his perception of the fact that social evolution is a general or collective movement, inclusive throughout its whole length of the special and particular developments which Littré erroneously regards as fundamental ages or secular epochs, that caused Comte to infer that though the elements of the historical process are connected, and always acting and reacting on one another, one must be preponderant in order to give impulse to the rest, and to guide them all in the same direction. He saw that only on this condition could there be a general collective movement, correlation between the particular constituent developments, a common goal, the unity presupposed by science. And accordingly, he inquired which was the superior element. The conclusion he came to was, that it must be that element which can be best conceived of apart from the rest, while the consideration of it enters into the study of the others —*i.e.*, the intellect. The history of society, he argued, must be regulated by the history of the human understanding. Thought is that which determines and guides the course of society. "It is only through the ever increasingly marked influence of the reason over the general conduct of man and of society, that the gradual march of our race has attained that regularity and persevering continuity which so radically distinguish it from the desultory and barren expansion of even the highest orders of animals, which share, and with intenser strength, the appetites, passions, and even the primary sentiments of man." I accept this answer as completely as Mr Mill, and would repel still more decidedly, if possible, the counter-answer of Mr Herbert

Spencer, that the social world is ruled not by ideas but by feelings. That view appears to me to be not only contrary to the facts, but psychologically absurd. We know and can know absolutely nothing of feeling apart from thought. Feeling neither has nor can have any existence independent of thought. Without feeling thought can certainly do nothing, but without thought feeling can have no being. Consciousness is primarily cognitive; and feeling, alike in its origination and development, is conditioned and determined by cognition. Erroneous, however, as is the view of Mr Spencer, it is somewhat more consistent than that of M. Littré, which represents the elements of consciousness as taking what is colloquially called *turn about* in ruling the historical evolution, one element being the superior principle in one age of the world, and another in another.

My final objection to M. Littré's observations is the obvious one that a law so restricted as he would restrict the law of three states cannot possibly be a fundamental law of history. If it be, as he represents it, empirical in character in the humblest sense of the term, and confined to a single sphere of human activity, and to one of the four ages of history, it can only be at the most a law of secondary importance. The pretensions put forth by Comte in connection with it, and unanimously and enthusiastically endorsed by his disciples, must have been highly extravagant. Why is there no acknowledgment of this? Why does M. Littré, even after all his admissions and restrictions, instead of confessing that what Comtists have hitherto so exultingly proclaimed as the greatest, most fundamental, most distinctive discovery of their master, the central law of social evolution as much as gravitation is of the solar system, has been found to be a very imperfect and incomplete achievement, the recognition of a mere fragment or section of the truth,—seem quite unconscious that any such confession is needed? Is it not needed? Then reasons to prove that are surely very much needed.

Comte, as well as his most eminent disciples, would appear therefore to have virtually shown that the so-called law of the three states was not what they alleged it to be. He involved himself still further in self-contradiction when, while adhering to his law, he attempted to found a new religion. I have no wish

to enter on an examination of the flimsy and fantastic system, the extraordinary compound of fetichism, scepticism, catholicism, and science, designated "the religion of humanity." Enough to remark that the object which it presents for adoration is a fetichistic Trinity, of which the world, space, and humanity are the persons or hypostases. Says one of its adherents in England in perfect accordance with the teaching of his master,—"We commemorate the services of our common mother the Earth, the planet which is our home, and the orbs which form, with her, the Solar System. We recall with gratitude the services which have been hitherto unconsciously received from her coeval institution, Space—services of which we now consciously avail ourselves. We commemorate the services of Humanity, the great organism of which we are inseparable parts; those, too, of all the generations of her individual organs who have by their efforts made us what we are."[1] Not unnaturally, perhaps, humanity is the favourite personage in this triad, and very wondrous indeed are the words and works, the prayers, hymns, sacraments, and other rites by which humanity, the Grand Être —space is the Grand Milieu and the earth the Grand Fétiche— is glorified. For example, the author whom I have just quoted is again only faithfully repeating a doctrine of the founder of his faith when he says,—"As the symbol of humanity we adopt, with somewhat altered associations, the beautiful creation of the medieval mind—the woman with the child in her arms; and to give life and vividness to this symbol, and to our worship in general, each Positivist adopts as objects of his adoration his mother, his wife, his daughter, allowing the principal place to the mother, but blending the three into one compound influence—representing to him Humanity in its past, its present, and its future." Leaving it to common-sense and the sense of humour in humanity to pronounce on the merits or demerits of this new claimant to faith, I require here only to remark that it ought to be counted by those who accept it as a fourth *état*, and that they ought to recognise three *états* as insufficient. If, as Comte thinks, our race is hastening into it with great rapidity, clearly positive science is not the last stage of history—clearly

[1] From 'A Sermon preached at South Fields, Wandsworth, Wednesday, 19th Moses, 72 [19th January 1860]. By Richard Congreve.'

the reign of reason is to be succeeded by that of fancy. The positivist religion is a confession that humanity can neither dispense with a religion nor construct one on the foundation of the positive philosophy,—a confession all the more noteworthy for being accompanied by a partial acknowledgment that the new religion propounded is composed of no better materials than poetic fictions. According to Comte, the ultimate result of historical progress is to be man's return to a form of the religion of his childhood, a conscious adoption of a refined and comprehensive kind of fetichism. So be it; but as the second childhood of an individual, however like the first, is to be counted a distinct stage of his existence, so ought the second childhood into which it would appear from the prophecies of the posivitists that our race is destined to enter.

Few probably who compare the positive religion with the positive philosophy, the later with the earlier speculations of M. Comte, will refuse to accept the conclusion of Mr Mill that they are irreconcilable. The pamphlet written by Dr Bridges to combat that conclusion and prove the unity of Comte's life and doctrine, is able but thoroughly delusive. As to the main issue, what Dr Bridges maintains is what Mr Mill never denied. "That the conception of an organised spiritual power was not one of Comte's later speculations but one of his earliest; that social reconstruction was from the first and to the last the dominant motive of his life; and that the 'Philosophie Positive' was consciously wrought out not as an end in itself, but as the necessary basis for a renovated education, the foundation of a new social order,"— all that Dr Bridges had simply no excuse for representing as denied by Mr Mill either expressly or by implication. Why, Mr Mill, instead of ignoring or denying that the philosophy of Comte aimed from the first to lay the foundation of a social system or polity, discussed with Comte himself, soon after the appearance of the 'Philosophie Positive,' the principles of his proposed polity in a correspondence which has been partly published by M. Littré. He even then asserted his right to separate Comte's polity from his philosophy in his own mind, and to reject the one while accepting the other; but neither then nor subsequently did he assert that they ever had been separated in their author's mind. The Comtist religion, however,

is not to be confounded with the Comtist polity. The chief doctrines of the polity are certainly among the earliest published speculations of Comte, and even if false, are false inferences from the philosophy. It is not so with the chief doctrines of the religion. The polity as conceived by M. Comte before the change produced on his mind by his affection for Madame Clotilde de Vaux, aimed at the organisation of society by reason and science. The religion is based on the assumption of the supremacy of imagination and feeling. It enjoins humanity, instead of putting away to take back the childish things it had outgrown. It undertakes the spiritual organisation of society, while admitting itself to be only a sort of poetical creation, a product of self-illusion. The Comtist polity may thus be regarded as a defective structure insecurely founded on the philosophy. The Comtist religion cannot be regarded as founded on the philosophy at all. Now it admits of no doubt that the doctrines which constitute the religion, as such, are among the latest speculations of Comte,—those which originated in what he characterised as "the revelation of power, purity, genius, and suffering" made to him through Mme. de Vaux. It was the inspiration flowing from that revelation which filled him with the ambition of "rendering to his race the services of a Saint Paul after having already conferred on it those of an Aristotle."[1]

I regret not to be able to conclude without remarking that Mr Mill, although right on the particular point indicated, fell into even deeper inconsistency of the very kind which I have been charging upon M. Comte. The positivist religion is of so fictitious a character that there is considerable excuse for counting it as nothing. But no such excuse can be pled as regards ordinary rational Theism. Now Mr Mill wished to relieve the doctrine of Positivism from the objection that it is atheistical. And while he can hardly be said to have attempted to meet the objection by argument, he certainly

[1] The article in the 'North British Review' mentioned at the commencement of this chapter, gives an excellent account of the Comtist religion, and much interesting information as to its history. Although the author of that article maintains, like Dr Bridges, that the Comtist religion is not inconsistent with the Comtist philosophy, probably his view is not in reality different from my own. At least, the respect or reference in which he maintains them to be consistent is not that in which I maintain them to be inconsistent.

met it with a most explicit denial, and affirmed in most explicit terms the compatibility of Positivism and Theism. "Positive Philosophy," he says, "maintains that within the existing order of the universe, or rather of the part of it known to us, the direct determining cause of every phenomenon is not supernatural but natural. It is compatible with this to believe that the universe was created, and even that it is continuously governed, by an Intelligence, provided we admit that the intelligent Governor adheres to fixed laws, which are only modified or counteracted by other laws of the same dispensation, and are never either capriciously or providentially departed from. Whoever regards all events as parts of a constant order, each one being the invariable consequent of some antecedent condition, or combination of conditions, accepts fully the Positive mode of thought; whether he acknowledges or not an universal antecedent on which the whole system of nature was originally consequent, and whether that universal antecedent is conceived as an Intelligence or not."[1] As it is not my business or purpose to estimate the character of Positivism as a general philosophy, I must not inquire whether or not the theory of knowledge on which it rests is essentially inconsistent with an admission of the existence of God or anything except empirical phenomena and their relations, with belief in a supernatural world—a world of first and final causes. I require only to indicate—what indeed scarcely needs it—that if Theism be not necessarily undermined and displaced by Positivism, but may make good its claims to the end of time, the law of the three states, as maintained both by Comte and Mill, is plainly false. In that case the theological state in its entirety is never outgrown, never passed through; it is only erroneous phases of theology that are passed through and cast off. Count, if you so please, these false forms of theology as one state, and still matters are not mended, for then there lies beyond the utmost confines of positive science a state of true theology, with a God to be sought after, to be known, and to be adored. Is that state not to count? Or, are we already in that world imagined by Mr Mill where the sum of 2 + 2 is not 4 but 3?

[1] Auguste Comte and Positivism, 15.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL: MICHELET AND QUINET.

I.

We have seen how the philosophy of history has been conceived of in France since the fall of the first Napoleon by defenders of the theocracy and absolutism like De Bonald and De Maistre, and legitimists like De Chateaubriand; by those ambitious theorists who, like Saint-Simon, Fourier, Buchez, Leroux, and Comte, flattered themselves that they had discovered the means of entirely revolutionising human belief, and of reorganising on new principles the whole system of society; by the admirers of philosophical and political compromise, eclectics like Cousin and Jouffroy, and a doctrinarian like Guizot;—and we now come to inquire how it has presented itself to the minds of the friends of democracy. These, I need hardly say, have in recent times been numerous. Democracy is in France the youngest of all the powers that be, but also the strongest, as would be universally apparent were it not that it is as yet blind and anarchical. It first began to assert clearly its claims about the middle of the eighteenth century; put forth its full force in the Revolution of 1789, and thereby laid feudalism in ruins; was used and abused, spread beyond the limits of France and crushed down within them, by Buonaparte, its armed soldier; and has been the perplexity and the terror, alternately the victim and the conqueror, of every regular government in France from that time until now, all having failed either to suppress or satisfy it. It had even under the reign of Charles X. distinguished representatives,—a man like Lafayette, orators like Foy and Manuel, a publicist like Armand Carrel; poets like Casimir,

Delavigne, and Béranger; an historian like Sismondi;—and under Louis Philippe these multiplied into a host.

To this party, this direction of thought, belong the two authors whose historico-philosophical writings must come next under our consideration. The name of either can hardly be pronounced without recalling that of the other, and this is what both would desire; for during some forty-five years they have been the most affectionate of friends, and have been intimately bound to each other by joy, sorrow, and labour, the same triumphs and defeats, the same convictions and hopes. Their lives have been so associated that death will not separate their memories. These two authors are M. Jules Michelet and M. Edgar Quinet.

M. Michelet was born at Paris in 1798, of poor but worthy parents. He has never forgotten or been ashamed of his origin. Love to the poor, love to the people, is one of the most deeply engraven features of his character. It has produced, saturated, coloured the larger portion of what he has written. He has probably, as lovers are wont to do, on many occasions unduly idealised the object of his affection, and adorned it with charms not its own, out of the rich treasury of his imagination. But at least there can be no doubt as to the sincerity of his affection. In his boyhood he was a bookbinder's apprentice. He had not the advantage of attending the courses of the École Normale, but he taught himself so successfully, that at the age of nineteen he became a teacher of others, in such studies as philosophy, history, and languages. His first publications were summaries of modern history.

In 1827 appeared his 'Principes de la Philosophie de l'Histoire, traduites de la Scienza Nuova de Vico,' which may almost be said to have made the great Neapolitan philosopher known to France, and which, indeed, helped considerably to make him known to all the rest of Europe, Italy not excepted. The dissertation prefixed to this volume gave a decidedly truer estimate of Vico's position in the history of speculation, of his merits and services, than had ever been given before. The mind of M. Michelet was naturally much influenced by his study of the 'Scienza Nuova,' one of the profoundest, greatest of books—the

philosophical complement to Dante's 'Divina Commédia.' Vico taught him that divine ideas are manifested through human actions—that the providence of God permeates the world of nations—that the idea of God is the productive and conservative principle of civilisation—that as is the religion of a community, so will be, in the main, its morals, its laws, its general history; and all such truth as this he eagerly imbibed, notwithstanding that he had drunk, even too deeply, of the wine of Voltaire. He refused, however, to regard the movement of humanity, the movement of providence in society, as an eternal rotation. He has always been a firm believer in progress. "Vico," he says, "did not perceive, or at least did not say, that if humanity proceeds in circles, the circles are ever growing larger."

M. Michelet presented his work on Vico to M. Cousin; and it was at the house of M. Cousin that he first met M. Quinet, who, by a curious coincidence, had shortly before presented to the brilliant orator and philosopher of eclecticism, a translation of Herder's 'Ideas towards a Philosophy of the History of Mankind.' They were drawn to each other at once, as by a moral magnetism, and, thirty-one years after, M. Quinet, in dedicating to his friend a work on 'Christianity and the French Revolution,' wrote these lines: "Depuis le premier instant où nous sommes connus, par quel hasard est-il arrivé que, séparés ou rapprochés, nous n'ayons cessé au même moment de penser, de croire, et souvent d'imaginer les mêmes choses, sans avoir eu besoin de nous parler? Cet accord de l'âme a toujours été pour nous la confirmation du vrai; depuis trente et un ans, ce combat nous réunit; c'est le combat éternel qui ne finira qu'en Dieu."

The philosophy of Vico is a generalisation of the history of Rome; the student of Vico must have always before his mind the history of Rome. Not unnaturally, therefore, we find M. Michelet publishing, in 1831, an 'Histoire Romaine.' It is a work in which inaccuracies are not difficult to discover, yet one which shows genius, a great power of historical divination, and peculiar charms of style. The first edition of his 'Introduction à l'Histoire Universelle,' the work of his which has most interest for us, in our present research, appeared in the same year. It

has gone through various editions. The second (1834) and the seventh (1843) are those which have been in my hands. I shall soon return to it.

In 1833 he began the publication of the chief work of his life, his 'Histoire de France.' In the following year, M. Guizot appointed him his substitute in the Chair of History at the Faculté des Lettres. At this time, and for several years after, his mind was much under the influence of Guizot's historical views. He speaks of him as his "illustrious master and friend;" he it was, he says in the preface to the 'History of France,' who taught him to "trace the course of ideas underneath the course of events;" he it was, he says in his Inaugural Discourse at the Sorbonne, who, "freeing science from all ephemeral passions, all partiality, all falsehood of matter and style, raised history to the dignity of law." In 1838 he was appointed to the Chair of l'Histoire et la Morale, at the College of France. The volumes of his 'History of France' appeared in regular succession till 1844—the sixth volume, which was published in that year, closing with the reign of Louis XI. Here he stopped till 1855, or rather, he made a gigantic leap forwards to the French Revolution, the history of which he published, in seven volumes, between 1847 and 1853. Why was this? It was because he and Quinet had become engaged in a severe struggle with the priests, in which, not content to stand merely on the defensive, they had turned on their assailants, and exposed their principles and aims by lectures on 'The Jesuits,' and 'Ultramontanism' (Quinet), and on 'Priests, Women, and Families,' and 'The People' (Michelet). The excitement produced was immense. The story of the struggle merits to be known—more so than the earlier one, in which Guizot, Villemain, and Cousin were the heroes, which is, however, better known; but unfortunately it was a complicated affair, which cannot be told profitably except at some considerable length. The position of the Government was certainly a difficult one; but, after all allowances on this score are made, MM. Guizot and Salvandy must be pronounced to have acted unwisely and illegally in interfering as they did, first, vainly to control, and then forcibly to suppress, the courses of the two bel-

ligerent professors. M. Michelet was suspended from his office in 1847.

It was under the influence of the feelings natural to this struggle with the priests and doctrinarian ministers of State, that, abandoning for a time the older history of France, he threw himself into the study of the French Revolution. The spirit in which the first six volumes of his 'History of France' are written is, accordingly, very different from that which pervades his 'History of the French Revolution;' very different, and, I venture to add, much better, much broader, much more impartial. Indeed he has written nothing so valuable as these six volumes. It is said he now despises them, and I can easily believe it, but hope he will never try to improve them. In them we find an historical philosophy on the whole sound, wedded to an art of historical painting the most wonderful, and producing a true resuscitation of the past, both in body and soul. They are the creations of the subtle, varied, powerful imagination of M. Michelet, working patiently on all the data which a vast erudition could supply, and under the guidance of the elevated and comprehensive ideas of Vico and Guizot. In later volumes, philosophy is still united with art, but it is a philosophy which reminds us much less of Vico and Guizot than of Voltaire and Dr Cabanis. Still, even his 'History of the French Revolution' is a great work; not more one-sided and not less stirring than that of Carlyle; reproducing the inner movement, the emotional life, of the time, in a succession of pictures as remarkable, from an artistic point of view, as those in which Mr Carlyle has represented its outward movement, its external agitation. His is even the truer work of the two; produced from within, and displaying, notwithstanding the numerous traces of partiality, prejudice, and caprice which disfigure it, a deep inner comprehension and feeling of its subject; whereas, sublime, terrible, incomparable of its kind, as is the power displayed by Mr Carlyle, in describing the taking of the Bastile, the massacres in prison, night of spurs, &c., his imagination has worked wholly from without, helping neither himself nor his reader to get in the least below the surface, the outward confusion of the scene; so that, from the first page to

the last of his book, the most significant event in modern history appears as absolutely devoid of positive meaning, a mere bankruptcy, a hideous imbroglio, a commingling of Chaos and Erebus.

The Revolution of 1848 restored our author to his professorship for a short time, but he was again silenced in 1851. After the *coup d'état* he refused to take the oaths of allegiance to Louis Napoleon, and was, in consequence, dismissed from his offices. In 1855 he resumed his 'History of France' at where he had left off, and carried it on to where his 'History of the Revolution' began, ten volumes filling up the intervening void. The best of these volumes are inferior to their predecessors, and some of them are truly deplorable productions. The principles by which M. Michelet now seeks to explain history are sickly and semiprurient conceptions, akin to those which he has expounded in 'L'Amour' and 'La Femme.' How a sane man can believe that the youth of France are to be regenerated and built up into moral manhood by such principles, is inexplicable. I need not speak of M. Michelet's prose poems on 'The Bird,' 'The Insect,' 'The Sea,' 'The Mountain,' published since 1858.

It is now more than time that I should return to the work in which M. Michelet has presented his historical philosophy in its most general form—the 'Introduction to Universal History.' It belongs to the period of his spiritual health, when Vico and Guizot had great influence over his mind, although he had a faith in progress unknown to Vico, and democratic sympathies which Guizot never felt. It is brief, unlaboured—touches only the summits of things—aims merely at fixing the positions which the chief nations of the world have occupied or still occupy in the history of humanity. When its author says that he might as well have entitled it an "Introduction to the History of France," because "logic and history" have proved to him that his "glorious country is henceforth the pilot of the vessel of humanity," and assures us that patriotism has had no share in his reaching this conclusion, we can only smile at such *naïveté* and vanity, and suggest that France may find quite enough to do in steering her own bark.

The point of view from which M. Michelet has chosen to sur-

vey universal history had been previously occupied by Hegel. What he has seen is in great part what Hegel had seen. It is in great part what every eye must see from the same station. Whether M. Michelet has borrowed much, or anything, from Hegel, I cannot venture to determine. The mere fact of equally regarding history as the progressive realisation of freedom in humanity, is certainly insufficient to prove that he borrowed a conception which is in itself so obvious and natural. And if he did not borrow that, he may well have borrowed nothing, since everything common to him and Hegel is contained in that—his fundamental and central thought.

At the outset he declares history to be the story of the interminable war between man and nature, the spirit and matter, liberty and fatality; and laments that the doctrine of fatalism is taking possession of science, philosophy, and history.[1] Pronouncing that doctrine in history as elsewhere pernicious, he undertakes to show that, notwithstanding many appearances to the contrary, history is the progressive triumph of liberty. Nature, he says, remains always the same, but man changes for the better. The Alps have not increased, but we have made a path across the Simplon. The winds and waves are as capricious as ever, but steam has rendered us independent of their caprices.

To all this in itself I have, of course, no objection. It is one of the chief services which we owe to M. Michelet and his friend M. Quinet, that they have so emphatically and eloquently insisted on the great truth that man is free, at a time when many were forgetting, and not a few denying it. They have not erred in maintaining that history shows us a progressive realisation of freedom. They have not erred, perhaps, even in thinking that it can show us nothing nobler. My doubts begin only when we go beyond this point—when we go as far as Hegel certainly goes, as far as Michelet perhaps goes, —when we affirm that history *is* the realisation of freedom in humanity—that and nothing more. In the progressive realisa-

[1] In a note he expressly exempts M. Guizot from the reproach of favouring the belief in historical fatalism. He has since concurred with M. Quinet in representing him as specially censurable on this ground.

tion of freedom I see an historical truth, but not the whole truth of history, not the definition of history. Growth in freedom is only one of several facts all equally essential to humanity and its development. Truth, beauty, and morality can no more be resolved into freedom than freedom into any of them; and they belong no less to the substance of mind, their evolution no less to the substance of history.

What M. Michelet proposes historically to prove is, that if, following the course of the sun and the magnetic currents, we proceed from east to west, from India to France, the fatal power of nature will be found showing itself less at each station. He starts with India, and describes man in that country as utterly overpowered by nature—as like a feeble child on its mother's breast, alternately spoiled and beaten, and intoxicated rather than nourished by a milk too strong and stimulating for it. We naturally ask, Why start with India? Why pass over China, which is still farther east than India? Is it not because man is less enslaved in China than in India, less the victim either of superstition or despotism? If so, the course of history fails at its very outset to coincide with the course of the sun. We naturally ask, also, Why should the course of history coincide with the course of the sun? How comes it that freedom should follow the same path with an object the movement of which is mechanically necessitated? Is freedom, then, but an appearance, and really subject to fatality? How is it that there is even an appearance of such subjection? We ask these questions, but we get no answers.

Beginning with India as the country in which man is most under the tyranny of nature, M. Michelet passes on to show us Persia as that in which liberty commences to manifest itself in fatality. The Persian discards with hatred the Hindu multiplicity of gods, and takes refuge in the thought of a divine power of pure and intellectual light which will eventually conquer the principle of darkness and matter. Pass to Egypt. The very soil of Egypt is the gift of the Nile, and the Egyptian necessarily felt himself entirely dependent on nature, yet, thanks to his faith in the immortality of the soul, he did not wholly sacrifice to it his personality: the aspirations crushed

in this world betook themselves to another. Human liberty next pursues its course from Egypt to Judea—which is placed in the East only to curse it and all its creeds in the name of unity and the spirit. M. Michelet here wisely overlooks the fact that Judea is not situated to the west of Egypt. He wisely lets go consistency, and so escapes erring like Hegel, who, rather than allow that freedom could run in any other than a straight line, made Palestine an appendage of Persia.

Still proceeding with his argument, he points out that Asia is a comparatively uniform mass; that Europe is vastly more articulated—that it is consequently more perfectly organised—and that it shows its superiority by a higher development of freedom. He compares and contrasts Greece and Rome with Asia and with each other. Much as both did—beautiful as was the one, and sublime and strong as was the other—they left the arts of peace to the conquered and enslaved, and so that victory of man over nature which is called industry was pursued but a little way. Rome dreamed that she had subdued the world and succeeded in building up a universal and eternal city; but the slave, the barbarian, and the Christian protested each in their own way that she was deceived, and each in their own way contributed to destroy the delusive unity which bore her name: while she dreamed, her physical and moral dissolution hastened on; Greece and Asia, whom she had vanquished by her arms, invaded and conquered her by their beliefs. Among the religions which reached her from Asia was one profoundly different from all the rest, which immolated the flesh and glorified the spirit, while *they* immersed and defiled man in matter. It —Christianity—is still the only refuge of a religious soul. "L'autel a perdu ses honneurs, l'humanité s'en éloigne peu à peu; mais, je vous en prie, oh! dites-le moi, si vous le savez, s'est-il élevé un autre autel?"

After referring, far too briefly, to the barbarian invasions, the kingdom of Charlemagne, the crusades, the medieval organisation of the Church or empire of the spirit, and of the State or empire of force, and contenting himself with a mere general affirmation that the Me, liberty, the heroic principle of the world, has slowly but gradually triumphed, as is evident alike

in science, religion, and industry, M. Michelet proceeds to show what part the political persons named Germany, Italy, England, and France, have taken in the enfranchisement of the human race. This is the most interesting portion of his work, and that which is much the most carefully done. The notes which illustrate it are also particularly interesting and suggestive. At the same time, I should be sorry to pledge myself to the truth of it. Perhaps it may be about half true. The readers of national characters seldom succeed so well. I shall merely indicate what M. Michelet's conclusions are. To examine them would be a lengthened task; to replace them by more certain conclusions, one in all probability beyond my powers.

He starts with the very true thought that Europe is a complex organism, of which the unity, soul, and life are not in this or that part, but in the disposition or relationship and interaction of its parts, so that any one part, any one of its peoples, is only to be understood through the others. Then he delineates the character of Germany as it has expressed itself in history, literature, and manners. The renunciation of self, the devotion of man to man and of man to woman, sympathy, indecision, mysticism, pantheism, these are, he thinks, its chief features. Germany is "the India of Europe, vast, vague, unsettled, prolific, like the pantheistic Proteus, its god." The Italian genius he regards as forming in almost all respects a contrast to the German; as not less strongly and persistently individual and independent than the other is soft and easily disciplined. The Italian cannot consent to sacrifice his personality even to God, and much less to man; he is capable of the highest devotion to a definite cause or interest, but not to an individual, nor in the service of a vague idea or feeling. He is the man of the city, not of the family, or tribe, or country. Politics, jurisprudence, art of the kind which is passionate yet severe, are the departments in which he excels. M. Michelet insists strongly on the perpetuity of the Italian character, its essential identity in ancient and modern times. He maintains that the German influence on it has been but external and superficial, and that the inhabitants of the different districts of Italy still display the same peculiarities of talent and disposition by which they were

distinguished in the days of the Roman Republic. In Germany and Italy, he goes on to say, fatality is still strong; moral freedom still borne down by the powerful influences of race, locality, and climate; in both, races and ideas are imperfectly or unequally mingled. The civilisation which is the least simple and natural, the most complex and artificial, the most European, the most human and free, is that of France. France is much more a person than Germany or Italy, better organised, greatly more centralised,—indeed, France only has a true centre and head. French genius is essentially social and active; its bent is towards war, politics, argument. What it seeks in war is not selfish gain but proselytism, the assimilation of intelligences, the conquest of wills. In literature it displays itself to most advantage in rhetoric and eloquence; is unequalled in prose, but deficient in poetical feeling. The spirit of the French people is profoundly democratic, and has always been so in a large measure. England is the antithesis of France, and explains France by contrast. England is "human pride personified in a people." Its pride punishes itself by internal self-contradiction, the antagonism of feudalism and industry, two powers which agree only in an insatiable thirst for gain that leads to life-weariness and despair. The Satanic school is the most representative phase of English literature. The English genius is aristocratic and heroic. England entered first among modern nations into the field in the struggle for liberty, but has no real love of liberty. It wishes liberty without equality, which is a selfish and impious liberty; whereas France seeks liberty with equality, which is alone a just and sacred liberty. It is France, therefore, which must inaugurate the coming era of a new unity, which will this time be a free unity. Every solution either of social or intellectual problems is sterile and unsuccessful until it has been interpreted, translated, and popularised by France. France is *the word* of Europe as Greece was of Asia.

Now, few of these positions, perhaps, are wholly true, and a considerable number of them are probably not far from wholly false. The estimate even of France, of her genius, of her place in Europe, is most inaccurate. The excessive centralisation of

France can be proved by masses of evidence of all kinds to have seriously injured the intelligence, character, and political capacity of Frenchmen—to have destroyed liberty, science, and art in the provinces—and to have brought no end of shame and misery on the nation; and yet M. Michelet sees in it a sign of the superiority of France to other nations. That is precisely as if a man suffering from cancer were to pride himself upon its dimensions. If M. Michelet had attempted to enumerate the solutions of social and intellectual problems which France has interpreted, translated, and popularised for the benefit of Europe, he would have found that she had been no more successful in that respect than her neighbours, and had, in fact, very often required to be taught by them. The nations have no need of a nation to interpret, translate, and popularise for them. Each nation must do that work for itself. France can only become the word of Europe by following the example of Greece, by having more original thought than the rest of Europe, not by interpreting, translating, or popularising the thoughts of other nations. What educated man in England or America looks to France to interpret or translate for him the solutions of social and intellectual, philosophical and religious, problems, which, during the present century, have been proposed in Germany? Then, where is the necessity that France should distance the other nations of Europe in the path of freedom? France has enjoyed so little freedom, has sought it so little, so intermittently, and so generally where and how it is least likely to be found—viz., on the streets by the light and help of insurrectionary passions and violence—that the probability of her inaugurating a new era of free unity does not seem very great. It does not excuse M. Michelet that in spreading these delusions he was repeating the teaching of M. Guizot. Both should have known better.

I pass over what seem to me mistakes in M. Michelet's estimates of Italy, Germany, and England. Suppose him to have made no mistakes—suppose his whole book, both in its reasonings and facts, true—and have we a science of history? M. Michelet has not said we have—and, obviously, we have not; we have only an account of a single aspect of history, of one side or phase of its development. And even that aspect or phase is

merely described, not explained. We are told that liberty has progressed from age to age—that nation after nation has contributed more or less to its growth; we are not shown the course of causation through which, in each age and nation, the result has been brought about. A line of thought is run through history just sufficient to connect the principal states which have risen and fallen with the lapse of time, and the general truth is established that all the arts of oppression have ever been found insufficient permanently to prevent the advance of liberty, but that is certainly not enough to constitute science. It may be something more and better than science, but it is also something less and other.

> "O Freedom! thou art not as poets dream,
> A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,
> And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
> With which the Roman master crowned his slave
> When he took off the gyves. A bearded man,
> Armed to the teeth, art thou; one mailèd hand
> Grasps the broad shield, and one the sword; thy brow,
> Glorious in beauty though it be, is scarred
> With tokens of old wars; thy massive limbs
> Are strong with struggling. Power at thee has launched
> His bolts, and with his lightnings smitten thee;
> They could not quench the life thou hast from heaven.
> Merciless power has dug thy dungeon deep,
> And his swart armourers, by a thousand fires,
> Have forged thy chain; yet, while he deems thee bound,
> The links are shivered, and the prison walls
> Fall outward; terribly thou springest forth,
> As springs the flame above a burning pile,
> And shoutest to the nations, who return
> Thy shoutings, while the pale oppressor flies."

The truth which Bryant has sung in these lines is the ultimate conclusion at which Michelet arrives, and it is indubitably a high and consoling truth, but as indubitably it wants the precision of a scientific law, and even many such truths would not compose a body of doctrine rigidly entitled to be called a science.

In a work entitled 'La Bible de l'Humanité,' published in 1865, M. Michelet has surveyed history from another, but not more comprehensive or scientific, point of view. Each great civilisation is regarded as a verse written by the life of a people,

in a universal, eternal, ever-advancing Bible, or gospel of humanity. From this point of view are drawn a series of pictures of national character, some of which—as, for example, those of India, Egypt, and Greece—are beautiful, and moderately accurate, while others are worthless, and the description given of Christianity is a mere caricature. Any one who looks into the work for more than a series of pictures, strung together on a very slender thread of argument, will, I fear, be disappointed.

II.

M. Quinet is much less known in this country than M. Michelet. He was born at Bourg in 1803. His father was an army commissary under the Republic and during the early years of the Empire; his mother, born near Geneva, was Protestant in her convictions. Both parents hated Napoleon, yet their boy soon became one of his most ardent idolaters, and only with the most painful struggle, after he had reached middle life, and contributed to create and spread the Napoleonic legend, which has been so injurious to France, was he able to emancipate himself from the tyranny which the memory of the Conqueror exercised over his imagination. He was educated at Charolles, Bourg, Lyons, Paris. He early began to cultivate poetry, history, philosophy; to study diligently many subjects; to read the best books in various languages. As he began, so he has continued. His whole life has been, in the rarest degree, a course of self-education, carried on through meditation, the study of books, the close observation of events, and foreign travel. As regards the last, for example, in or about 1823 he spent nearly a year in England; in 1827 he studied at Heidelberg; in 1829 he was in Greece, as one of a scientific commission sent to explore the Morea; in 1832-33 he travelled in Italy, and in 1834 in Germany; in 1843-44 he visited Spain and Portugal; and the years of his exile, since 1851, have been passed chiefly in Belgium and Switzerland. Wherever he has gone it has been, not as an ordinary sightseer, but as an earnest and sympathetic student of nature, of historical monuments, of literature, of men and their ways. I know

of no more generally or finely cultured mind among living authors than his.

His first publication of importance was a translation of Herder's 'Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Humanity' (1825-27), to which he added an able introduction. This book, I have already mentioned, was dedicated to M. Cousin, and was the occasion of its author's becoming acquainted with M. Michelet. Since its publication M. Quinet's pen has had little rest. Its products have been very varied,—poems, political pamphlets, histories, impressions of travel, philosophical and theological disquisitions. The ten volumes of his 'Œuvres Complètes' contain only those which were published in or before 1858. He was for two years Professor "des Littératures Étrangères," at Lyons, and was then, notwithstanding the well-known democratic character of his opinions, transferred to a chair "de Littérature Meridionale," instituted expressly for him at the College of France. His teaching excited great enthusiasm among the students of Paris, but brought him into conflict with the priests and Government. He was not the man to recoil before such opposition, in a path which he deemed traced out for him by duty; not the man to refuse

> "Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
> Rather than in silence shrink
> From the truth he needs must think."

He was suspended from his office, however, in 1845, about two years before his friend Michelet was similarly silenced. The Government appeared to triumph, but in reality merely completed its own moral ruin. It had sown the wind, and in February 1848 it reaped the whirlwind, and was swept away by it. M. Quinet was among the first to enter the Tuileries, gun in hand. He was restored by the Republic to his chair, and chosen by the electors of his native district to represent them in the National Assembly. He was much less successful as a deputy than as a professor. His comparative failure was due, partly to want of practical tact, but mainly to the complexity of the situation, and the perversity of contending parties. He did what he could to prevent that wicked act—the French expedition to Rome. He foresaw the triumph of

Louis Napoleon, as he had foreseen the fall of Louis Philippe. Of course, after the *coup d'état*, he became an exile. A decree banishing him from France was promulgated on the 9th of January 1852; but he had freely withdrawn ten days after the 2d of December 1851, feeling that the sorest exile is "not to live out of one's country, but to live out of the city of conscience, imprisoned in the house of injustice." Through all the years which have since elapsed, he has not ceased to labour for the instruction of his countrymen and race. After the recent war, he attempted to take a part in public affairs at the Assembly of Bordeaux, but was ill received. I do not think that, there or then, he could have been of much use. To the youth of France his writings may be of incalculable value. There are none, perhaps, in recent French literature, fuller of the moral seed most needed. Whatever may be thought of some of M. Quinet's opinions, his life must be admitted to have been singularly unselfish, pure, high in aims, earnest in endeavours, fruitful in works, and profoundly religious in spirit. He has been twice married: his first wife was a German; the present Madame Quinet is a Roumanian. There is an admirable account both of his personal life and literary activity by M. Charles-Louis Chassin.[1]

M. Quinet's career as an author began, I have just mentioned, with a translation of Herder's 'Ideen.' He may almost be said to have found himself in Herder, to have had himself revealed to himself by Herder's book as in a mirror. Herder is in some measure at the bottom of all that he has attempted and accomplished. He accepted Herder's central thoughts as his principles, Herder's aims as his own purposes. His 'Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire' and 'Essai sur les Œuvres de Herder,' show us how thoroughly he had adopted and assimilated the truth which is in Herder. He thus came to the study of history with the same comprehensive conception of man's relation to nature and of humanity in itself, with the same catholic spirit. Almost all that is true in Herder is presupposed in Quinet.

But there was a weak side, an element of error, in Herder. He was right in holding that all nature is related to man, and condi-

[1] Edgar Quinet, sa Vie et son Œuvre. Paris, 1859.

tional to the history of man; but wrong in that he exaggerated the power of nature over man, and left the impression that the moral world is only the product of the natural world, the laws of history simply the laws of nature manifesting themselves through a particular organism. Now, M. Quinet was even from the first no servile disciple of Herder, but a free critic and impartial judge as well as a disciple, and he not only never fell into this grave error, but assigned the utmost importance to its antagonistic truth. He founds on the truth which is in Herder, but at least as much on the truth which Herder overlooks. Far from regarding human history as merely natural history (*eine reine Naturgeschichte*), he insists that there is in it a something altogether peculiar and distinctive—a something nowhere found in nature, but which struggles against, subdues, and uses nature. What that something is we know and can name, because we have it within us and can feel it. It is the Will. The Will which we are conscious of in ourselves, and in virtue of which we resist the force of circumstances, the seductions and oppression of society, was also in our earliest ancestors, to render them capable of resisting the tyranny of physical nature. When Cato slew himself in order to escape from a world where he could no longer be his own master—when More, and Russell, and others ascended the scaffold for a cause which they deemed worthy of their blood, —their actions may have been more heroic than that of the first man who, in the exercise of his free-will, confronted unintelligent nature, and strove to determine his own future; but although different in form, these two orders of action were one in principle, alike springing from the activity of the mind itself. That internal self-activity is no prodigy which heaven creates for a day and never renews, is no special gift conferred only on highly-favoured individuals, but what is most essential in man and the root of all his history. History is from beginning to end the development and display of liberty, the continuous protestation of the mind of the human race against the world which oppresses and enchains it, the process through which the soul gradually secures and realises its freedom.

Thus, regarding history as the manifestation of free-will, M. Quinet pronounces against subjecting it to any rigid formula.

Its course is not a straight line, but tortuous ; instead of moving direct to its end, it has gone back upon itself a hundred times. There is, however, a general movement which is on the whole upward and onward. The Me only gradually disengages itself from the universe which surrounds it, as the statuary only gradually disengages from his block of marble the image which originally existed merely within himself. It rejects by degrees all that is foreign to itself, all that is contrary to a complete display of its nature, to perfect freedom. It progresses in a path which is substantially a vast and unending deduction from the general to the particular. Human personality at first diffuses itself through the immensities of space and time, animating with its own life the wandering hosts of heaven, the mighty seas, the teeming earth, the mountains, forests, and floods. In this stage of his existence —one which may be studied in India—man, embracing all, adoring all, forgetting only himself, has a cosmogony and a theogony, but no proper history. Withdrawing from the waste vagueness of the physical universe, the spirit then proceeds to confine itself in empires—Media, Persia, Egypt, Assyria—with which its existence is so bound up that it has no individual force or worth. Another step, and personality, although still half confounded with the city and borrowing thence its vigour, is seen to have gained greatly by concentration. With Greece and Rome the city is broken, and now the Me, the spirit, alone with itself, finds in itself an infinity surpassing that with which it started, the true infinity, the Christian universe. This infinite it again proceeds to divide, to analyse, seeking to explain and derive it wholly from its own self,—hence the Reformation, Cartesianism, the Revolution have been, and an unknown future will be. Humanity wanders like Ulysses from land to land, from sea to sea, from adventure to adventure, in quest of a lost home. Impelled and guided by an invisible hand and divine instincts, it never rests long content in any dwelling-place. India and China, Babylon, Palmyra, Ecbatana, Memphis, Athens, Rome, and other countries and cities, it has lodged in for some hour of its life, some age of time ; but in none of them finding what it sought, it has forsaken them one after another, and is still in search of its Ithaca.

It is a natural consequence of M. Quinet's attaching the im-

portance which he does to the fact of will or personality in history, that he should strongly insist on the necessity of every man who would understand history studying his own nature. He who would comprehend the life of a hero, or of a nation, or of humanity, must seek the principles of explanation within himself. He has there the key to all history. If we would give a true basis to historic science, we must "start from the narrow sphere of the individual Me, and thence ascend, step by step, along the succession of empires and peoples, up to the hut of Evander, the tent of Jacob, and the palm-tree of Zoroaster."

These seem to me the most prominent ideas in the two above-mentioned works. But there is another indicated to which M. Quinet has always attached the utmost importance, and which he has elsewhere carefully elaborated. It is, that the fundamental and generative principle in civilisation is the religious principle; that the political form assumed by society is uniformly determined by its religious beliefs, and moulded on its religious institutions. He insists that what raises man above an animal subject to mere natural laws and forces, and by uniting man to man originates society, is the apprehension of Divinity; that the fetich assembles around it the tribe, and a national god brings forth a nation; that religious unity founds political unity; and that all the revolutions which have taken place in the social relations of human beings have been owing to the modification of their thoughts about God. This view is directly opposed to that which generally prevailed in the eighteenth century, and, indeed, to what is perhaps still the prevalent opinion—viz., that religion is only a secondary social element, if not even a social invention. Of course, M. Quinet has no claim to absolute originality in connection with it. It had previously found some measure of expression through Fichte, Baader, and Krause, Görres and Steffens, Schelling and Hegel, &c. It to some extent underlay the whole teaching of the Theocratic school. It has found, however, much its most accurate and adequate expression in Quinet. Above all, it has received from him much its nearest approximation to an adequate historical proof. I regret that space forbids my attempt-

ing to convey any conception of the ingenuity and talent, of the wealth of knowledge and depth of thought, with which he has worked out that proof in 'Le Génie des Religions' as regards the civilisations of India, China, Persia, Egypt, Babylon, Phenicia, Judea, Greece, and Rome; and in 'Le Christianisme et la Révolution Française,' 'Les Jésuites,' 'L'Ultramontanisme,' and 'La Révolution,' as regards medieval and modern civilisation. The highest point of view from which these works can be surveyed collectively, and in connection, is as a demonstration of the truth that the idea of Divinity is the root of civilisation —and its gradual apprehension, the regulative principle of the history of civilisation; and, judged from that point, nothing approaching to them in cogency and completeness has been written by any author known to me.

M. Quinet, then, has advocated, with conviction and enthusiasm, the rights of free-will and of religion in history. I have to add, that he has, with equal zeal, advocated the rights of conscience in history. The article which he published in the pages of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' in 1855, under the title of "La Philosophie de l'Histoire de France," is a memorable document in this connection. It was an eloquent and passionate protest against the dominant historical philosophy in France, against the doctrinarian theory of the course of human things, as from beginning to end an affirmation of the fatalism of facts, and a denial of the claims of justice in estimating the character of national events. That philosophy, that theory, seemed to him to be at once a symptom and cause of the sickness of society in France. Nations, he said, had fallen irretrievably much more frequently through their infatuated faith in false ideas, or infatuated rejection of the truth, than through the power of their enemies; and as France was cherishing a number of grave errors regarding her own past, she was in imminent danger if every man who could use a pen did not come forward in defence of the simple truth which was discarded and dishonoured,—if every thoughtful Frenchman were not willing to have his night of the 4th of August and loyally sacrifice for his country his errors in history, philosophy, and science. One of the greatest and most pernicious of these errors is an immoral historical

optimism, which rests on two sophisms that have, unfortunately, come to be accepted as axioms—viz., that despotism leads to liberty, and that men always do the opposite of what they suppose they are doing.

This doctrinarian optimism M. Quinet has described as applied to the history of France, in a way which may be thus summarised. At the very commencement of French history it is found pronouncing the Gauls incapable of self-education, of self-civilisation, and vindicating their conquerors in the name of the future of France and of humanity. It teaches that it was necessary for the progress of both, that the Gauls should first be trampled under foot by the Romans, and afterwards, along with the Romans, by the Franks; that not otherwise than through violence and slavery could order and freedom be reached. In a word, it begins by justifying conquest, representing wrong as necessary, might as inherently right, and thus discrediting, as far as it can, the holy idea of justice. As it begins, so it continues. It maintains that it was most fortunate that the Albigenses and Waldenses, and other protesters against Papal and feudal tyranny, who, even in the twelfth century, proclaimed such great truths as that every believer is a priest, did not succeed, and that their ideas were effaced in blood, till the world, some generations later, was prepared for them. Thus it makes irrational any such thing as pity for the fate of the victims of Toulouse and Beziers. It maintains equally that the success of the struggles of the provinces, of the communes, and the third estate, which began so early and terminated so late, would all have been disastrous, ruinous to France; and that, in fact, France owes its very existence, and almost all its greatness and glory, to the victory of the monarchy over these opponents, the victory of unity and despotism over liberty and self-government. When it comes to deal with the struggles which arose out of the spread of the principles of the Reformation, instead of acknowledging that France went grievously wrong in rejecting Protestantism,—that her policy with regard to the new faith, under Francis I., and Henry III., and Charles IX., and Henry IV., and Richelieu, and Louis XIV., was at once unjust and foolish, criminal and disastrous, — it pretends that the real

significance of the wars of religion, and of the measures pursued relative to the Reformed, was not whether France should be Protestant or Catholic, but whether it should be feudal or monarchical, and that, as the triumph of Protestantism would have involved the victory of the nobles over the crown, and the recovery of their medieval powers and privileges, it was necessary, for the welfare of France, that Protestantism should be defeated and suppressed. Arrived at the age of Louis XIV., it salutes it with boundless enthusiasm, as the glorious consummation of all the bloodshed, and usurpations, and oppression of the centuries which preceded it, as the end which sanctified all the means which led to it, as the crowning of the edifice of centralised authority. It finds a place for the Revolution on the ground that freedom ought to be developed after authority, but justifies all the governments which followed, on the plea that they were occupied in organising those liberties which the Revolution proclaimed. From first to last, it finds that France has committed no folly, and perpetrated no wrong; that what ought to have been has always been; that the successful cause has uniformly been a just cause.

From this whole view of French history, which he regards as the official and universally accepted view—that taught in every school where French history was taught at all—M. Quinet dissents and protests, severely, and almost violently. France, he maintains, far from showing herself either infallible or impeccable, really erred and sinned grievously, preferred darkness to light, and sowed for herself the seeds of a vast harvest of evils, in the instances referred to, and many others, where doctrinarianism vindicates her conduct. And the first act of her regeneration, he declares, must be that she confess her sins and repent of the iniquities of her fathers.

An attack so direct, so sweeping, and so little conciliatory, on what was wildly accepted as established historical doctrine, naturally excited considerable anger, which found vent in counter-protestation. It was not shown, however, and could not, I believe, be shown, to be other than substantially just and greatly needed. Historical optimism is an evil so subtle and seductive, that perhaps few historians in any country do not occasionally,

and to some extent, yield to its influence, while many it wholly masters and possesses without their being aware that such is the case. Any historical philosophy which commits itself to an absolute or unconditional defence of social institutions as they are, which identifies the real of any given time with the rational, must be optimistic, fatalistic—must identify the real with the rational throughout all time. For the present is the necessary product of the past. The present could not have been precisely what it is had not the past been precisely what it was. The true and adequate explanation of any social fact or institution can be found only in its actual historical antecedents, and will be found there. But if we absolutely approve the end, it is absurd not to approve the means which necessarily led to it. If we accept, for example, as the best thing which could have happened to France, precisely what happened, in the early and complete triumph of the monarchy over its enemies, in the centralisation of all powers in the hand of the king, it is utterly unreasonable to regret the measures which arrested, say, the south of France in that career of national development, of independent religious thought, and independent literary activity, on which it entered so early,—or any of the other measures, however sanguinary and treacherous, by which local independence, personal, political, and religious liberties were crushed down and rooted out. The historian is, in fact, in all circumstances, in danger of confounding the necessary connection which he finds between institutions and their antecedents, with the moral necessity, which is a moral justification, or the physical necessity, which takes away moral responsibility ; and the historical philosopher who sets to work with the political aims which Hegel had as regards Germany, and Guizot as regards France, leaves himself not even a chance of escape. Guizot by no means escaped without injury, although he did not drive his bark on the rock with full sail, like the more venturesome Hegel and (M. Guizot's own friend and colleague) Cousin. He did not explicitly maintain that the real world of history was just what it ought to be, but he suggested that conclusion: he did not censure the instinctive protests of conscience against triumphant wrong as "subjective fault-finding;" but the whole

drift of his reasoning tended to prove that the wrong had a right to be triumphant, and that it would have been unfortunate for humanity if events had occurred in a way which would have pleased conscience better. He found each event necessary to that which had succeeded it, onwards to a state of things which he regarded with complete satisfaction, and virtually justified the entire series, on account of this necessary connection between antecedents and consequents. The accusation brought by M. Quinet against the doctrinarian philosophy of history was thus not irrelevant, not misapplied.

Where, however, was the logical error committed by doctrinarian historical philosophers? It lay in two things; the first of which was accepting any actual state of society as a state of realised reason. The real in history is never the rational, but only more or less of an approximation to the rational, never identical with but only participant in reason. No fact, no group of facts, no social state, has that absolute goodness in virtue of which it can be regarded as an end which justifies the means absolutely necessary to attain it. We can always ask, Might society not have been better, and would it not have been better, had antecedent acts and events been better? But that is what the doctrinarians never ask. They accept a certain state of society as above criticism, as entirely conformed to the standard of reason, and then show that it was precisely what the actual past was capable of producing. Their primary assumption is erroneous. Let any state of society be critically examined, and its defects and evils will testify to what the crimes of the past have done for it. M. Guizot had no difficulty in showing that what M. Quinet, giving expression to the natural voice of human conscience, has denounced as crimes, were the steps which led to the early unification of France and the centralisation of power in the person of the monarch; and these results he was entitled to hold had been in many respects beneficial to France, and probably the chief reasons why she so early became the leading nation in Europe; but he ought not to have overlooked as he did the debtor side of the account, the terrible price which France has already paid, and must still pay, for the glories of the monarchy and the advantages of administrative

centralisation—and he would then have found it hard, I think, not to admit that France might have been much happier and stronger now if her history had been quite other than it was, if the natural development of the different divisions of France had not been violently arrested, if liberty had been more successful, if Protestantism had conquered as it deserved, if unification had been later, and centralisation less complete.

Further, historical optimism fails to recognise that freedom of choice and action is compatible with necessary connection between historical phenomena. That the present is precisely what the past has made it is true, but not more true than that the men of the past had it in their power every hour so to act as would have given us a different present. No man needs to deny the connection between actions and their effects to be necessary because he holds action to be free, and it is only actions and their effects which history presents us with. Necessity runs through actual history from beginning to end, yet actual history rests on free choice from beginning to end; on choice out of many possibilities, some better and some worse. It is from ignoring this latter fact, from confining their regards solely to actuality, that so many historical philosophers have found no room in their systems for conscience.

M. Quinet performed excellent service, then, by insisting on the rights of conscience in relation to historical speculation. Perhaps it would not have hurt his own cause, and it would only have been just to his opponents, and especially to M. Guizot, if he had acknowledged that his objections validly applied not to the substance of their historical philosophy, but to assumptions associated with it. Suppose all that M. Quinet has urged to hold true of the historical philosophy of M. Guizot, the value of that philosophy as an explanation of the actual course of events remains intact. The doctrinarianism, the implied optimism and fatalism, in M. Guizot's system must go, if M. Quinet be right; but these will not carry away with them any of its explanations as to how fact gave rise to fact, how social conditions succeeded one another, in the history of France.

I have only to add that no man has done more than M. Quinet to explain and delineate the spirit and characteristics of

the nationalities of Europe. In proof I must content myself with simply referring the reader to the following works: 'La Grèce Moderne et ses Rapports avec l'Antiquité,' in vol. v. of his Œuvres Complètes; 'Les Romains, Réorganisation des Provinces Danubiennes,' in vol. vi.; 'Allemagne et Italie,' and 'Les Révolutions d'Italie,' in vols. ii. iii. and iv.; 'Mes Vacances en Espagne,' in vol. ix.; 'Fondation de la République de Hollande,' 'Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde,' in vol. v.; 'Le Génie des Religions;' the essay on "The Moral Unity of Modern Peoples;" and even the lectures on the Jesuits and Ultramontanism.[1]

[1] M. Quinet's last book of importance—'La Création'—which I have as yet seen only in the German translation, "durchgesehen und eingeführt" by the distinguished geologist, Professor v. Cotta of Freiberg, I shall require to refer to in the "Conclusion" of this work. Its chief aim is to show how the history of the world is related to the history of humanity—how the one history throws light on the other.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL CONTINUED: DE TOCQUEVILLE, ODYSSE-BAROT, DE FERRON, AND LAURENT.

I.

By far the most moderate and judicious, profound and comprehensive, thinker, sharing in democratic convictions, which France has had in recent times, was a man of singularly beautiful character and life, the high-minded and pure-hearted Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-58). Mr Reeve has enriched our literature with an excellent translation of his writings, which are probably now studied with as much admiration and more intelligence in this country than in France itself. They have nowhere found more appreciative reviewers than in Britain. I should be going out of my way to engage in work well performed already if I enlarged on their general merits and characteristics instead of simply indicating their relation to historical philosophy, for which a very few words will suffice.

He had no belief in the easy discovery of general laws of historical evolution. He did not profess to have discovered or even to be aware of any such laws himself, although, as he jocularly observed, he heard almost every morning that somebody had been more fortunate and found a hitherto unknown fundamental law of history by means of which the most wonderful social improvements were to be brought about. He had a constitutional aversion to all general historical speculation, because it could not be based on a full and accurate knowledge of the whole time and space, of the whole mass of facts, covered by its conclusions. He could always find scope enough for his powers of acquisition and reflection, great as they were,

within a comparatively limited area; and he preferred cultivating a small and distinctly defined territory thoroughly, to cultivating a vast and vague one superficially.

But notwithstanding this jealousy of general historical philosophy, both his 'De la Démocratie en Amérique' (1835) and his 'L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution' (1856) have great interest and value for the historical philosopher. The former especially is a singularly original and masterly application of the inductive method to the study of society. Never before had the social characteristics of a country been so faithfully observed and skilfully analysed, and so ingeniously yet impartially compared with those of a country very different in its history, very differently circumstanced in many ways, in order to discover the real workings of certain dispositions or tendencies of spirit which they possessed in common. As a magnificent exemplification of the logical processes by which social and historical science are to be obtained the work is invaluable, independently of the worth of its results. Most of these processes, indeed, Guizot had already successfully practised in his examination of the development of European civilisation; but it fell to De Tocqueville to employ them with a fulness of illustration, a thoroughness and detail, only possible within a more limited and manageable sphere, and to show that a smaller field with a more elaborate culture would yield a harvest of results, at least not less rich and precious than a much larger one with less culture.

The work on 'L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution' is less conclusive, but chiefly because death prevented its gifted author from completing it. The differences between French society before and after the Revolution are not brought out, nor are their causes. The influence of the literary men of the eighteenth century on opinions and events is passed over unestimated. Still the work accomplished much, although not all that it sought to accomplish. It investigated the causes of the catastrophe which cast to the ground the old French monarchy, and of the course followed by the Revolution, in a manner far more sifting and trustworthy than had previously been displayed. The inductions it contained were based on the most laborious

and conscientious study of original testimonies, the accounts and correspondence of intendants, parochial registers, parliamentary decisions, and contemporary memoirs. It was the least declamatory and yet the most terrible exposure of the incompetency and oppressiveness of the monarchy which had appeared, and the most convincing demonstration that the Revolution had left essentially unaltered far more of the governmental system of the monarchy than was supposed. It showed that while the fall of the monarchy was the natural consequence of its faults, the Revolution had affected the course of the development of French history much less than was believed, and much less than was to have been desired. It showed, in particular, the absurdity of attributing to the Revolution the administrative centralisation of France, and, at the same time, the folly of the promoters of the Revolution in maintaining centralisation while desirous of fostering liberty.

II.

The 'Letters on the Philosophy of History,' by M. Odysse-Barot, have few of the higher qualities which lend an indescribable charm and inestimable value to the pages of M. de Tocqueville. But they are exceedingly clever and sparkling, give evidence of considerable historical learning, and express with vivacity and force some useful truths. They appeared at first in the journal 'La Presse,' and were addressed to its editor, the well-known M. Emile de Girardin, whose criticism of them is appended to the volume of the 'Bibliothèque de Philosophie Contemporaine,' in which they were republished in 1864.

The first nine letters deal in a light, smart, journalistic fashion with war and peace, military genius, the superiority of Frederick the Great to Cæsar and Napoleon, diplomacy, treaties, and congresses. They have a connecting thought, and it is that society is constituted by two principles—force and justice—of which the former leads to war and finds expression in battles, while the latter tends to peace and finds expression in treaties. These two principles are compared to positive and negative electricity, the warm and cold currents of the Gulf Stream, the

ebb and flow of the sea, the male and female, &c. They are held to be equally necessary, since the one supplements and completes the other, since right without force and force without right are alike nugatory and sterile, but force is described as the more prevalent. M. Odysse-Barot has counted, he says, the years of war and peace and the treaties concluded and broken from the fifteenth century before Christ to the present time, and has found that there have been 3130 years of war to 227 of peace, and 8397 treaties sworn to be eternally observed, the mean duration of the eternities of which has been two years. War, he contends, is not accidental or contingent, but universal and necessary, having its primary cause in the essential nature of man, and its final cause in the essential nature of things. The progress of civilisation has, in his opinion, no tendency to destroy or even diminish it. All that, and what he has said in connection therewith, I am content to leave without remark, having already had occasion to exhibit the chief fallacies involved in such views.

With the tenth letter we pass from the shell to the kernel of his theory. He here tells us that historical study has three stages, the empirical, the critical, and the philosophical, or the stages of fact, method, and law, of observation, classification, and generalisation; that it has now reached the second but not the third of these stages; that important materials, however, for a philosophy of history have been collected and prepared; and that the general conclusion which he himself proposes to expound is the result of ten years' research and reflection. He then attacks the notion that France is a single nationality, and that French unity has existed for ages, and insists that, on the contrary, France is only a geographical expression, and French unity a quite recent creation. In the next letter he proceeds with his proof. He regards every State in Europe, except Portugal, Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland, as not a nationality, but "a composite of heterogeneous elements, a Macedonia of peoples, an ethnological harlequin, a social mosaic." He tells briefly the story of the formation of the British empire through the union of Wales, Ireland, and Scotland with England; and gives a very interesting account of the slow and painful pro-

cess by which what is called France was built up on the ruins of the independence of Normandy, Provence, Guienne and Gascony, Lorraine, and Brittany, laying, of course, the greatest possible emphasis on the fact that each of the different peoples incorporated into Britain and France still retains its distinctive character and feelings. He commences the twelfth letter with the prophecy that perhaps before the end of the century, and certainly before a hundred years have passed, the great States of Europe will be dismembered; that factitious nationalities will have given place to real nationalities; that Britain, for example, will be redistributed into four kingdoms, and France broken up into five states—France proper, Brittany, Aquitaine, Burgundy, and Lorraine. Such is the inevitable conclusion, he argues, of two principles which have taken root in the world, and can neither be arrested nor eradicated — the principle of decentralisation and the principle of nationalities; the former meaning dismemberment, and the latter the system of small or natural states, as opposed to that of artificial or agglomerated states. But what is a natural State? a true or simple nationality? It is, M. Odysse-Barot asserts, neither a linguistic, nor an ethnological, nor a religious, nor a moral fact, nor a combination of these four orders of facts, but a purely geographical fact. "Une nationalité, c'est un bassin." The centre, the axis of a real nation is a river. This law, we are told, has no exception, and an attempt is made to show that geology and climatology accord with history in recommending this distribution of peoples according to basins. In the following chapter a second, so-called, is deduced from the first: "Une frontière, c'est une montagne." These two laws are said completely to define what a natural nationality is. Then a third law is laid down as determining the whole course of the historical movement. "The world oscillates between two systems of society; simple and compound societies; natural nationalities and artificial agglomerations; peoples with frontiers and peoples without them; the system of small states and the system of great empires." These two systems, according to M. Odysse-Barot, regularly alternate, and historical progress is little else than the periodical return of the same facts and ideas. The system of agglomera-

tion or of great empires being at present at its height, must be speedily succeeded by that of true nationalities. A confederation of such nationalities is what Europe will present in the near future. M. Odysse-Barot insists that small and natural states are those which are most favourable to civilisation and liberty, to material and moral wellbeing.

The first impression which this theory will produce on most minds is one of amazement at its visionariness. The whole of Europe will, we are told, in a hundred years at longest, be divided and distributed in the manner indicated. Well, how is this wonderful change to be brought about? Is it to be by a great European war? No. We must do M. Odysse-Barot the justice to acknowledge that he obviously did not propose the doctrine of natural boundaries as a plea for French aggression and spoliation. So far from that, he recommended with a liberality which cannot be regarded as other than excessive—in 1864, be it remembered—that Alsace should be handed over to the German Confederation of States, and Artois to Belgium. Besides, nations have never hitherto been seen to rush to war for the express purpose of getting split up or being made smaller, and are not likely to be seen doing so in future. The disintegration or dismemberment which is predicted will require to be realised, therefore, by an internal movement, by the irresistible enthusiasm of the populations of large empires for reorganisation according to "basins." Are "basins" at all likely, however, so to inflame the imaginations of men? Is "a banner with the strange device," "Basins," at all likely so to terrify or so to charm the powers that be in Russia, Prussia, and Austria, in France, and Italy, and England, that they will hasten to parcel out their kingdoms into "natural nationalities," and forthwith retire in favour of governments which can have only a fraction of their own strength? What probability is there of Russia dividing herself according to river-basins, even if she had mountains enough to serve as natural boundaries to them? And if Russia does not, how can Prussia? And if Prussia does not, how can France? The more, in fact, we look at the theory in the light of common-sense, or in relation to practicability, the more marvellous does its visionariness—to use no stronger term—appear.

And yet the theory has not been held merely by M. Odysse-Barot. It had been—in substance—previously advocated by M. Proudhon and others. It has since, as all the world knows, been put forth by the insurrectionary communists of Paris and the federal republicans of Spain. It is probably what many of the advocates of "Home Rule" in Ireland wish. The explanation of this, doubtless, is, that although the theory be absurd, its absurdity arises from the exaggeration of truth. Centralisation is a very serious disease, and most countries are suffering from it more or less. Centralisation, as it at present exists in France, is not improbably more injurious than would be even the division of the country into a confederation of small states, on the plan recommended by M. Odysse-Barot. But the remedy for one evil is not another evil, although its contrary. The remedy for the evils of excessive centralisation is not dismemberment, but simply a reasonable decentralisation, the limitation of the central power, and the leaving to the provinces and municipalities the free management of their own affairs. It is to add to the advantages of general unity those of local and personal liberty, and to avoid excesses on either side.

Our author has not been happy in the discovery of his three so-called laws. The first—"nationality is a river-basin"—he affirms to be a law without exceptions; but, to substantiate the assertion, finds it requisite to deny that there are any but three real nations in Europe, and probably should have gone further and denied that there are any real nations in the world. What country except Egypt is with any strictness a basin? And even Egypt is a basin bounded not by mountains but by a desert and a sea. If Great Britain were divided according to basins, it would contain far more states than four. But Great Britain never was divided in that way; nor, so far as I can discover, has any country of Europe been so divided within historical times; and certainly none since national feeling made its appearance in history.

Then, as to the second law—"a natural boundary is a mountain"—any line of demarcation whatever between two nations is a natural boundary; for what makes a boundary natural is nothing in itself, but the circumstance that it separates distinct

nations. The true line of contact is the natural boundary, whether mountain, or river, or sea, or even merely a hedge or ditch. M. Odysse-Barot regards the sea as an unnatural boundary; but assuredly the inhabitants of Great Britain will not be found to agree with him. It is deeply to be regretted, indeed, that the principle of nationality should ever have been associated with the dogma of so-called natural boundaries. The association or confusion may be traced chiefly to an obscure and unscrupulous party in France before the Franco-German war, who wished their country to have the Rhine for a boundary, notwithstanding that there were no more thorough Germans anywhere than those who lived on the French side of the Rhine; and, under the name of the Munroe doctrine, to a similar party in America, who wished the whole North American continent to become the seat of a single great republic, notwithstanding that Canadians and Mexicans are nationally as distinct as can be from citizens of the United States. Since Russia, Prussia, Bavaria, Austria, and many other nations, had no more natural boundaries than the United States or France, the doctrine advocated by these parties amounted to the affirmation of an almost universal right of international robbery. It was therefore matter for congratulation, that until very recently no government, even when acting on it, was shameless enough to avow adhesion to it. It had doubtless its influence in the annexation of Nice and Savoy to France, but it was not brought prominently forward, and the annexation was effected through universal suffrage, the popular vote. Near the close of the Franco-German war, however, the German Government took on itself the responsibility which even Napoleon III. had declined; and it was then deplorable to observe how the learned professors of Germany—men bearing names most justly honoured for services to science—hastened forward to repeat and justify the governmental order of the day. In the form in which the principle is advocated by M. Odysse-Barot, it is not, as in that just referred to, either a direct provocation to international robbery or a justification of such robbery, but its acceptance could not fail to lead to all the horrors of civil war.

These two fictitious laws reduce nationality, as M. Odysse-Barot himself says, to "a geographical fact." But who does not

see that that is a one-sided and exaggerated, a mean and narrow, view of nationality, and that geography, like race, language, religion, and unity of government, is merely one of the factors which contribute to form nationality? Geographical limits, identity of race and descent, community of speech and faith, the same government and the same political antecedents, participation in the same triumphs and the same disasters, all conduce to the rise and growth of nationality, yet not one of them constitutes it, and not one of them will infallibly and in all circumstances generate it. It arises from the action of many and varied causes. It is no natural quality and no necessary product of natural forces, but a spiritual creation, a result of intellectual and moral development, merely influenced by natural forces and outward circumstances. To this extent all nationality is artificial, and it suffices to show that the distinction between natural and artificial nationalities as drawn by M. Odysse-Barot is inherently untenable.

For the third law—"the world oscillates between a system of small states and a system of great empires"—no historical proof is attempted; and without ample proof we must decline to accept a proposition which identifies progress with oscillation, development with the incessant recurrence of the same facts and ideas. M. Odysse-Barot has so much faith in its truth that the prevalence of the system of large states appears to him enough of itself to warrant his prediction of the near advent of the system of small states. It does not seem to have occurred to him that the former system is a natural expression of economical and social conditions, which, it is to be hoped, will not pass away in the course of a century; that it is implied in railways and telegraphs, and the gigantic proportions of modern industry and commerce, as well as of modern war, and will prevail so long as these continue. Divide France into five independent nations to-day, and the work of unification, by fair means and foul, by force, fraud, and honest exertion, will commence to-morrow. A great empire is now not more difficult to govern than a small state was formerly, while the disadvantages of small states are more numerous and decided. From beginning to end, then, the theory of M. Odysse-Barot is a failure.

III.

The 'Théorie du Progrès' (1867) of M. H. de Ferron, is a much more valuable work than that just noticed. It obviously owes its origin chiefly to fear, inspired by the growth of Cæsarism in France. M. de Tocqueville had long before demonstrated that democracy was in imminent danger of issuing in despotism; and that the more thoroughly the democratic spirit did its work in levelling and destroying social inequalities and distinctions, just so much the less resistance would the establishment of despotism encounter, while at the same time so much the more grievous would be its consequences. With regard to France his gloomiest forebodings were realised. In 1852, Cæsarism was acclaimed by eight millions of votes. The system was subsequently not only carried out to all its practical consequences, but the theory—the Messiahship of Cæsar—was undisguisedly advocated by the man most interested in it, in his 'Histoire de Jules César,' and by two of his employés, M. Dubois-Guchan, in his 'Tacite et son Siècle,' and M. Romieu, in his 'Ere des Césars' and 'Le Spectre Rouge.'[1] The main design of M. de Ferron's book is to expose the theory of Cæsarism, and to exhibit the true character and tendencies of its practice.

The first part of the first volume gives an outline of the history of the theory of progress. Vico and Saint-Simon are treated with special appreciation; in fact, about half of the whole space is devoted to the former alone. M. de Ferron combines Vico's conception that historical development has had three stages, the divine, heroic, and human, with Saint-Simon's conception that organic and critical periods have succeeded each other. These two generalisations, when united, seem to him to determine what is the line or course of human progress; and the second part of the volume is an attempt to verify them. Greece, Rome, France, and England, are argued to have had their theocratic, aristocratic, and democratic phases, and the histories of law, art, religion, and science, to have exemplified

[1] The 'Philosophie Absolue de l'Histoire' of M. Höené Wronski is, so far as I know, the only general philosophy of history which incorporates the theory of political messiahship. I shall give some account of his works in Appendix B.

the alternation of organic and critical epochs. I need say nothing of this composite theory, as I have already dealt with the conception of Saint-Simon, and will, at the appropriate time, examine that of Vico.

Greece and Rome not only reached a democratic stage, but they passed through it into Cæsarism. The nations of Europe either have reached, or will reach, the same stage. Can they avoid the same fate? That depends upon what organisation can be given to democracy, which again implies a knowledge of the conditions and means of progress. How has progress been brought about in the past? Has it been by authority or by freedom? To this question M. de Ferron returns an elaborate historical answer. He institutes an independent investigation into the influence of the control of society by the State on progress under the Romans and in modern times, on the one hand, and into the influence of liberty in France and England on the other, and finds that the political lessons which have been inculcated by Madame de Staël, Benjamin Constant, M. de Tocqueville, and M. Laboulaye, in France, and by John Locke, Lord Macaulay, and J. S. Mill, in England, are alone those which history warrants; while the Cæsarists, and Saint-Simon, and Louis Blanc, and Thomas Carlyle, recommend us to follow a path which history abundantly proves to be one of shame and death. His argumentation is always able, and even where not decisive, is valuable. The suggestions which he offers as to how Cæsarism may be avoided are practically most interesting, but do not concern us here.

IV.

We conclude this chapter with 'La Philosophie de l'Histoire' (1870) of Professor Laurent of Ghent. It forms the eighteenth volume of his 'Studies on the History of Humanity,' and may be regarded as a *résumé* of the volumes which preceded it. It expounds the general doctrine involved and established in those volumes. M. Laurent has been privileged to bring to a close a work which few would have had the courage to commence. He has been privileged to study every stage of human history

known to us through written documents, leisurely and long enough to enable him to master the contents of the original sources of information, and of the principal treatises of the more eminent historical scholars of all times and countries; and to trace, age after age, with independence and profundity, the development of society, and of the ideas most influential in preserving and regulating it. He has been privileged to communicate to the world the results of his researches and reflections in a long series of volumes, each devoted to some great epoch of time—the East, Greece, Rome, Christianity, the Barbarians and Catholicism, the Papacy and the Empire, Feudalism and the Church, the Reformation, &c., &c.;—and to recast and revise, correct and improve his work, in a second edition.

Elevation of aim, independence of judgment, and diligence in research, are most conspicuous qualities in this vast monument of toil and talent; but not more so than the love of philosophy, the desire to comprehend the meaning and purpose of facts, to discover the ideas which underlie events. In facts in themselves, facts out of which no thoughts can be extracted, M. Laurent shows no interest; in all facts, on the other hand, which can be seen to have influenced the essential destiny of man, to have helped or hindered the human race in its struggle for freedom and justice, he shows an almost too passionate interest. The dominant principle of his mind is obviously that of final causes. Each event, each institution, suggests to him the questions—What was the design of it? What did man intend by it? What did God intend by it? The ideas of efficient causation and of law are much less prominent. In other words, his intellect is decidedly more philosophical than scientific,—so far as philosophy and science are distinguishable.

The circumstance that his 'Philosophy of History' is the summary and conclusion of a series of most remarkable, most masterly 'Studies,' confers on it an authority which it could not have possessed had it stood alone. It not only speaks for itself, but all its predecessors speak for it and through it. That very circumstance, however, although greatly enhancing its value in one respect, has not proved favourable to it in another, and is, indeed, the chief reason why it is no complete philosophy of

history, or even complete outline of a philosophy of history. M. Laurent's 'Studies' have for alternative title 'History of the Law of Nations and of International Relations.' That title is too narrow, and the author did well to take the more general one of 'Studies on the History of Humanity;' still these 'Studies' are mainly on the moral history of humanity, on its progress in the knowledge and practice of justice and benevolence, on the growth of man's insight into and reverence for the law of conscience both as regards himself and his fellow-men. Now, notwithstanding its title, M. Laurent's 'Philosophy of History' is so much the summary of the 'Studies' that it deals exclusively with the same phase of human development; which is just to say that it overlooks the scientific, the æsthetic, and the industrial evolution of society, and so is, properly speaking, no philosophy of history as a whole.

It is doubtless, in part at least, owing to the same circumstance, that M. Laurent makes no attempt to determine the problem of the philosophy of history, to define or describe what that philosophy ought to do; to lay for it a foundation in the science of human nature, or even to indicate its relationship to the science of human nature; to fix its general position among the sciences; and to ascertain the methods required for its successful study. These also are fatal omissions in a philosophy of history. They are explained in the case of M. Laurent by his proceeding at once to enunciate the general theory which had underlain and directed his anterior labours.

In the Introduction to his work the author expounds his views regarding the immanence of God in humanity, the coexistence of Divine Providence and human liberty, and the reality of progress, moral and religious progress not excluded; and attacks the views of those who would banish God from history, or acknowledge the working of the devil in history. He argues that there can be no philosophy of history unless it be admitted that God is present in the minds and hearts of all men, controls and guides the entire series of events, and, while respecting human freedom, is continually raising the human race to higher stages of being. Naturally we ask,—Does not history, then,

prove these truths? And to our astonishment we find that M. Laurent not only believes it does, but believes that these truths with their proofs actually constitute the philosophy of history. Why the philosophy of history should presuppose what it can prove,—how it can even presuppose what it is the proof of,—he does not explain. And, in fact, his conception of the relation of theology or theodicy to the science of history appears to be just the reverse of the truth. He represents the science of history as a department of natural theology, when all that can be properly maintained is, that there is a department of natural theology the truths of which may be legitimately inferred from the findings of the science of history. The science of history itself neither requires nor admits of any theological presuppositions.

M. Laurent conceives of the philosophy of history as a theodicy; his point of view is not the scientific but the religious. It is entirely from this stand-point that he criticises the theories of his predecessors.[1] In Bossuet he sees only an advocate of the miraculous government of Providence; in Vico, of ancient fatalism; in Voltaire and Frederick II., of chance; in Montesquieu, of the fatalism of climate—in Herder, of nature—and in Renan, of race; in Thiers, of revolutionary fatalism; in Hegel, of pantheistic fatalism; in Comte, of positivist fatalism; and in Buckle, of the fatalism of general laws. It will be observed that, with the exception of one Italian, one English, and two German works, he has confined his survey to writings in French; that Frederick II. and M. Thiers have no claims to a place in a history of the philosophy of history not possessed by all historians; and M. Renan none which would not warrant the introduction of all ethnologists. But it ought also to be observed that his aim obviously has not been to give a general account of historical philosophies, but simply to state and criticise representative specimens of those which imply the truth of miracle, chance, or fatalism; which deny, explicitly or implicitly, the immanence of God, and the progressive, providential, non-miraculous education of man through the Spirit of God acting on reason and free-will. From this point of view, his criticisms, although some-

[1] L. 1, c. 1.

what too polemically conceived and sharply expressed, must be admitted to be, in general, of remarkable ability.

He proceeds to attempt to prove, by an examination of the facts of history as a whole, that God has been ever present therein in wisdom, and justice, and power. Taking up in succession antiquity, Christianity and the barbarian invasions, feudalism, the Reformation, and the Revolution, he strives to show in each case that what man willed was not what God willed, and has accomplished but something lower, something less, if not even something contrary. Man has been continually growing in the knowledge of God's will, but even yet he has no more than a vague and dim perception of the general plan of His providence, although in looking back he can clearly enough see that there was a plan underlying events which those who took part in them never dreamt of, being engrossed in far other plans of their own. He has attempted to establish this, I say, by an examination of the actual facts of history, and by what is entitled to be regarded as a most minute and searching examination of these facts, seeing that the argument summed up in book i. chap. ii. of this eighteenth volume has been carried through all the previous seventeen volumes. In doing so he seems to me to have made a most valuable contribution to natural theology. It is chiefly in the service of natural theology that he has laboured so long and so patiently; and he has successfully shown, what professed natural theologians have so strangely overlooked, that not less than the heavens and earth—nay, that much more than either—does history declare the glory of God.

The conclusiveness of his argumentation has been challenged by Professor Jürgen Bona Meyer, but on quite insufficient grounds.[1] The first of the two objections urged by the professor is as follows: "The fact that the consequences of human actions are frequently not those which the agents willed, and that in virtue of this contradiction between the willed and the accomplished, men obtain against their wills what is best for them, is capable of explanation from the natural reaction and counteraction of the appropriately arranged forces of the physical and moral worlds. The examination of history enables us

[1] Von Sybel's Historische Zeitschrift, Bd. xxv. s. 377.

only to recognise this natural antagonism of the forces which it comprehends; and to refer their order, their disposition, to a divine power, is an act of faith not involved in the historical investigation. In order to help in strengthening faith in a divine government of the world, the study of history would require to lead to results which admit of no sufficient explanation from the natural concatenation of what has happened, or from the free wills of men. But such results are just those to which M. Laurent's point of view does not lead."

It is inexplicable how Professor Meyer—usually a most careful writer—could have so misunderstood M. Laurent's argument as he has here done; and how he could have overlooked the numerous passages, the pages after pages, in which M. Laurent had done all that was possible, and far more than seemed necessary, to make misunderstanding of the kind impossible. The argument of M. Laurent is that the examination of history discloses a plan pervading human affairs which has been realised through the operation of the forces of the physical and moral worlds, through the actions of human beings influenced by their surroundings, but which is not their plan, which has not originated with man, which has not originated with matter, which cannot be the work of chance, which cannot be an effect without a cause, and which must therefore be ascribed to God. Again and again he states his argument substantially so; and yet Professor Meyer thinks it relevant to object that the fact that what is wished is often not what is attained can be explained from the natural reaction and counteraction of the appropriately arranged historical forces, as if M. Laurent had failed to raise the question, Who arranged these forces? and as if he had never argued that it could not be nothing, could not be chance, could not be nature, could not be general laws, could not be man, but must be God. What is the avowed purpose of the whole 237 pages of introduction and criticism which precede his examination of the facts? Here is an abridgment of what he himself says: "We have passed in review all the theories imagined by philosophers and historians to explain the mysterious fact that there is in the life of man unfolded in history a succession, a plan, a development which cannot be referred to

man himself. Some, despairing from the outset to find a solution, make of their ignorance a blind power which they call hazard. Evidently that is no solution. Hazard is a word, and nothing more. Other writers—the majority of writers—say that this mysterious power is nature, under the form of climate, or races, or the whole of the physical influences which act on the moral world. But what is nature? Whence has it this power, this foresight, this intelligence, which are so conspicuous in the course of our destinies? If nature is matter, and nothing but matter, that too is no answer. Who will believe that matter acts with wisdom, with intelligence? Where there is intelligent action there must be an intelligent being; therefore nature leads us to God. Finally, there are those who substitute for nature general laws. But do not laws suppose a legislator? And who can this legislator be if not God?"[1] These are the conclusions, I repeat, which M. Laurent devotes the first 237 pages of his work to enforce,—partly by expounding his own views, and partly by assailing those of others. And then he occupies the 134 pages which follow with an examination of the facts of history as a whole, undertaken expressly and exclusively to show that they necessitate the same conclusions. In these circumstances, Professor Meyer's objection must be held quite unreasonable. And indeed it seems to me, no objection can possibly apply to M. Laurent's reasoning which would not equally apply to every form of theistical argument from effect to cause, from plan to designer, from course of procedure to character of the agent. He does not pretend that history proves to us the presence of God as it proves to us that a certain battle took place, or that a certain law was passed; but that it proves it as clearly as nature does. He takes no notice of objections, like those formulated by Kant, against all theological reasonings which are based on empirical facts, and assume the validity, beyond the bounds of experience, of the principles either of efficient or final causes; but against all less sweeping and radical objections he has made his position quite secure.

Professor Meyer proceeds: "Laurent's point of view is likewise suspicious, since it leads to misinterpretation of the will

[1] P. 239, 240.

of men, in order thereby to exalt so much the more the will of God. He has fallen into this error, for example, when he maintains that Christ had not the intention of founding a new religion, but of preparing men for the near end of all things. Indeed he has been misled throughout by his false point of view to follow the course of the human will mainly in the direction of perversity and evil."

Now it is unfortunately true that M. Laurent has fallen into the error of maintaining that Christ in preaching the gospel of the kingdom willed what God did not will, and has accomplished not what He Himself willed, but what God willed. The cause of that, however, is not the general point of view from which he has argued for the presence of God in history, but simply the fact that for the reasons which he gives in the fourth volume of his work, that entitled 'Étude sur le Christianisme,' he rejects Christianity as a special divine revelation. I deeply regret that a man who in every page of his work shows so profound and living a sense of the presence and providence of God, should not have a deeper insight into the character and mission of Christ; but I can find no grounds for attributing his defective vision to his historical "point of view."

The general assertion of Professor Meyer, that M. Laurent's point of view has led him throughout to seek chiefly the evidences of perversity and evil in the motives of men, is utterly baseless. What M. Laurent really seeks chiefly throughout his work are the evidences of man's progressive apprehension of the plan and purposes of God in human life, of his own rights to liberty and equality, of religious truth and moral duty. His argument requires him to lay no undue stress on the perversity and wickedness of men's wills. It is enough for it that men's wills have not been coincident with God's will; that their purposes have been narrower and meaner than His plans; that high as are the heavens above the earth, so high have been His thoughts above their thoughts.

The second and last book of M. Laurent's 'Philosophy of History' treats of progress in history. It is, in fact, an inductive proof of the reality of the progress of man, individually and nationally, in all ethical directions. In a chapter on "The In-

dividual and his Rights," the author traces the growth of liberty and equality in the oriental theocracies, in the classical nations, in the Christian Church, in Germanic and feudal society; and concludes by warning against the individualism which denies the rights of the State, and the socialism which denies the rights of the person. In the second chapter—"The Individual and his Duties"—he argues that the facts of history viewed along its whole course indubitably establish that there has been both a religious and a moral progress in the personal lives of men,—a growth in spiritual truth and an emancipation from spiritual errors, a growth in purity and delicacy of feeling as to relations between the sexes, a decrease of cruelty, &c. From individuals with their rights and duties he passes to nations and their relations. The third chapter dwells on the significance of nationality, and gives an historical exposition of the formation of nationalities in humanity, or of the differentiation of humanity into nationalities. It shows how the variety of nations in the unity of humanity contributes to the profound and exhaustive development of the soul, and to the advancement of the race in knowledge and morality; how different from true national feeling were the sentiments which united the subjects of Asiatic despotisms and the inhabitants of Greek cities, and which impelled the Romans to constant aggression on their neighbours; how the principle of nationality was affected by Christianity and the Papacy; how it was furthered by the Renaissance and the Reformation; how its course was modified by the Monarchy, the Revolution, and Napoleon; and how, in still more recent times, it has made itself known and felt in all directions as never before, seeing that in peace and war the peoples are everywhere appearing with the assertion of their right to decide for themselves, to be themselves the central and conspicuous figures in whatever drama Providence composes for them. Along with the idea of nationality itself there gradually grows up this other, that nation is bound to nation by ties of justice and nature; that they have rights and responsibilities, mutual obligations and interests; that they are members of humanity, a brotherhood, a family, and that a wrong done by one to another, by the strongest to the weakest, is fratricidal and

unholy. The growth of this idea, or, in other words, the growth of a true recognition of the moral relations in which nations stand to one another, of how they ought to feel and act towards one another, is traced from the earliest to the latest times in the last chapter of M. Laurent's work, and certain speculations connected therewith bearing on the future prospects of humanity are discussed. A hopeful, yet not utopian, spirit characterises all his speculations as to the future.

The conclusions relative to progress, which have their evidence summarily stated in these four chapters, and stated in the seventeen volumes of the 'Études' with a fulness never before equalled, are far from composing a complete philosophy of history, or even of historical progress; but they are most important conclusions, which every philosophy of history must undoubtedly include, and M. Laurent is entitled to all gratitude for the enormous labour he has bestowed on their demonstration.[1]

[1] In Appendix B a considerable number of French treatises, essays, &c., on the philosophy of history, not mentioned in the preceding pages, will be found briefly noticed. A few works I have passed over in silence, not because I regard them as of comparatively little importance, but because in my "General Conclusion" I shall have to refer to them in discussing the questions on which they seem to me to be of special interest. The 'Considérations sur la Marche des Idées et des Évènements dans les Temps Modernes' of M. Cournot, and the 'Introduction à la Philosophie Analytique de l'Histoire' of M. Renouvier, are, *e.g.*, books of this latter class.

BOOK II.

GERMANY

CHAPTER I.

THE PROGRESS OF HISTORIOGRAPHY IN GERMANY.

It seems desirable briefly to indicate the course by which German historiography led on to the philosophy of history. The reader must, however, kindly remember that there is no good account of the development of historical literature in Germany, no reliable guide-book on the subject, although the Historical Commission of the Royal Academy of Bavaria, to which the world is already indebted for some very able works on the history of the sciences, has promised to supply this great, and, I believe, widely felt want, and may be expected to do so admirably.[1]

It is the general view in this country that the historical literature, and indeed the entire literature, of Germany sprang up of a sudden in the latter part of last century: and the notion is not altogether false; for the marvellous literature with which we associate the name German, although perhaps at the present day the richest in Europe, does in a sense date only from about the middle of the eighteenth century. However, it has underground roots which go very far back: in no department is its connection with the most ancient times quite severed; it is the brilliant son of a long line of plain but respectable ancestors. There is abundant evidence of this as regards historical composition without going further back than the Renaissance and the Reformation.

These two events both acted on the study of history in the same way. Both stimulated inquiry and gave an impulse to the collection of historical materials, the former sending the German humanists to search in history for illustrations of the Greek and Roman classics, and the latter the German reformers to seek

[1] The task has been intrusted to Professor Wegele of Würzburg.

in it arms of attack and defence against the adherents of the Papacy; while, at the same time, both led men to value historical knowledge, not for its own sake, but merely as an instrument, and so to study history in a way the reverse of catholic, free, or philosophical. The Reformation especially could not fail powerfully to affect the character of ecclesiastical historiography, which has had in Germany an uninterrupted course from the Reformation downwards, and which has steadily advanced from the narrow bondage of dogma towards the broad freedom of science. It began with the celebrated Centuriæ Magdeburgenses of Matthias Flacius and his assistants, a vast work in thirteen folio volumes, which first appeared at Basle (1559-74), and contained an enormous erudition whence all Lutheran Church histories for a century afterwards were drawn, but which sought throughout to vilify Romanism and glorify Lutheran Protestantism, and displayed a spirit so bitter and unjust that Roman Catholics had some excuse for speaking of it as 'The Centuries of Satan.' J. H. Hottinger and others followed with histories written in the interest of Reformed as opposed to Lutheran Protestanism. In this stage ecclesiastical history was the slave of sectarian theology,—at the best a conscientious and laborious slave. George Calixtus, a man of great genius and merit as a theological thinker, pointed out a broader and better path than any which was followed until long after. The Impartial History of the Church and Heretics (Unpartheyische Kirchen und Ketzerhistorie) of Gottfried Arnold, the first volume of which appeared in the last year of the seventeenth century, marked an extreme point in the pietistic reaction against a dead orthodoxy and Churchly self-sufficiency and intolerance, subordinating as it did everything external and doctrinal to pious feeling or even mystic emotion in the individual, and proceeding on the notion that the only true Church is invisible, composed of "hidden ones," who are hated and persecuted not only by avowed worldlings, but by the partisans of the visible Churches, men who wrangle and fight for the honour of being sound in the faith although wholly destitute of spiritual life. There can be no doubt that this view was useful as a reaction; that it directed the attention which had hitherto been fixed almost exclusively on dogmatic opinions and

outward facts to the varied phases of the inner spiritual life; and that, by giving "heretics" more than justice, it helped to secure for them their due of justice, and thereby greatly to enlarge and enrich Church history both in conception and execution: but it was, notwithstanding, a narrow, one-sided, and prejudiced view, which was naturally soon left behind.

The next step was an important one. About the middle of last century there was formed an historical school, seated chiefly in the universities of Göttingen and Jena, which performed services that must always be remembered with gratitude. It had for representatives in the department of ecclesiastical history such men as Mosheim, Pfaff, the Walchs, &c., who endeavoured to do justice to all parties, and to find sense in all systems; and whose works are characterised not only by this admirable impartiality, but by an unwearied diligence in the collection of materials, an earnestness of research which makes them often indispensable even at the present day. The chief defect in the writers of this school was want of philosophical insight into the organic development of the past, and into the working of the deeper and more pervasive factors of history; whence it resulted that although they honestly tried to explain events, or to refer them to their causes, their explanations were superficial and unsatisfactory—the causes indicated, secondary and individual, not permanent and essential. This defect is still more manifest in Schröckh, Spittler, Planck, and others, who continued the school; and it may fairly be regarded as the internal and constitutional cause of its having gradually lost its separate existence, and been absorbed into the cold dry Rationalism, inaugurated by Semler, with which the last century closed and the present began. That Rationalism rendered by its bold criticism both of facts and accredited opinions important services, and its scepticism completed the independence of religious history or dogmatic theology; but, treating as it did the whole Christian past as the product of human passions, mean motives, and trivial causes, and seeing in it no underlying plan, no organic connection and development, no worthy end, it had no claim to be considered as philosophical in character, although it helped on to the philosophical schools which succeeded it.

These were called forth by that entire change in the spiritual atmosphere of the world which made itself first universally perceived by the tremendous volcanic eruption of the French Revolution; but gradually showed itself in all lands in the most manifold forms, literary, artistic, political, moral, scientific, philosophical, and religious, making all the springs of life gush forth, and all its channels flow with a fulness unknown before. They may, so far as Church history is concerned, be reduced to two—the one having had Augustus Neander for its greatest representative, and the other Ferdinand Christian Baur—the one having received its strongest impulse from Schleiermacher, and the other from Hegel,—but both having, notwithstanding their profound differences, this in common, that they consciously rest on philosophical principles, consciously treat religious history as a process which has laws and relationships of the kind that fall within the province of philosophy.

The course of political historiography ran nearly parallel to the ecclesiastical. Of course the Reformation influenced it much less; in fact, it influenced it at first very little. Powerful as that event was in certain respects, it was long before it worked its way as a transforming principle into the political life of Germany; it operated visibly as a sword long before it brought about as leaven any marked political change capable of making itself felt in the composition of political histories. In the sixteenth century, Cario, Cluverius, Gamerus, Genebrard, Kupferschmid, Macker, Neander, and others, all wrote what they themselves correctly called Chronica. Some of these works must have been very popular;[1] but none of them contains philosophy enough even to entitle it to be regarded as history in the higher sense of the term. Sleidan, who had in an exceptional degree some of the best gifts of an historian, came nearest to producing what might properly be called a universal history in his 'De Quatuor Summis Imperiis Libri Tres,' published in 1556; yet the mere title of this work discloses the antiquated and absurd point of view from which it is written;

[1] *E.g.*, I find from the Catalogue of the University Library of Tübingen, that that library contains eighteen editions, all belonging to the sixteenth century, of the 'Chronica' of J. Cario, first published in 1499.

and nothing can more decisively show how dull a race his successors must have been, than the fact that J. G. Gatterer, who died only in 1799, has the honour of having definitively convinced historians of the absurdity of dividing general history into four periods corresponding to the monarchies of the prophet Daniel.

In the seventeenth century, and down even to the middle of the eighteenth, civil, like ecclesiastical historiography, was in Germany in a truly deplorable condition, the prime cause of which, doubtless, was the anarchy and misery of the Thirty Years' War (1618-48), which ended with the Peace of Westphalia—*i.e.*, with the division of the nation, according to religious differences, into two halves, and the consummation of the ruin of the secular power and of political life through the establishment of small local sovereignties. "It would be hard," says Mr Bryce in his excellent work on the Holy Roman Empire, "to find, from the Peace of Westphalia to the French Revolution, a single grand character or a single noble enterprise, a single sacrifice made to great public interests, a single instance in which the welfare of nations was preferred to the selfish passions of their princes. The military history of these times will always be read with interest, but free and progressive countries have a history of peace not less rich and varied than that of war; and when we ask for an account of the political life of Germany from the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, we hear nothing but the scandals of buzzing courts and the wranglings of diplomatists at never-ending congresses." This state of things reflected itself in the dull, dead way in which history was written. Never were men more devoid of political insight, breadth of view, national feeling, or power of narration, than the German historians of this epoch; they were in all these qualities far behind their French and English contemporaries; they had, in fact, only that one merit which the Germans have preserved even in their lowest estate, and displayed through all the vicissitudes of their history—perseverance, industry in collecting materials, the patient discharge of the most wearisome taskwork, that "laboriositas" of which Leibnitz speaks,—"cui nationi, inter

animi dotes, sola laboriositas concessa esse videtur." In this century Germany produced, so far as I know, not a single civil history of real excellence. It produced, however, several valuable collections of historical materials—*e. g.*, those of Meibomius, Schilterus, Canisius, and especially the 'Acta Publica' of Londorp, and the 'Codex Juris Gentium Diplomaticus,' the 'Scriptores Rerum Brunsvicensium,' and 'Accessiones Historicæ' of the illustrious Leibnitz. And that great man, it must be remembered, meant himself to utilise the enormous store of materials which he had amassed by three years of incessant research in Franconia, Bavaria, Suabia, Austria, and Italy, in a history of the House of Brunswick, of which, unfortunately, only the outline or plan was published, although that suffices to show that the work proposed was grandly and philosophically conceived. He was to have begun with the geography and geology of Germany, and with the historical conjectures which these suggest; next, to have described, as far as linguistic remains and other records allowed, the different tribes which had successively settled in it; to have become more minute and special from the time of Charlemagne, and in recounting the histories of the emperors descended from him, and of the five emperors of the House of Saxony, to have included the histories of the great Saxon, Bavarian, and Lombardian houses, from which arose that of Brunswick; then to have narrated the story of its fortunes; and finally to have traced all its relationships. Leibnitz believed himself able to throw a vast amount of new light on medieval times, and so almost to revolutionise men's views regarding them; probably he did not greatly overestimate his powers.

The antiquarian and documentary collections of the seventeenth century were preludes to the works of a very learned school of civil history which flourished at the same time, in the same places, under the same influences, and which displayed the same qualities as the school of ecclesiastical history founded by Pfaff and Mosheim. It was represented by Mascov, the two Mosers, Justus Möser, Häberlin, Pütter, A. L. von Schlözer, and others—men, some of whom were highly remarkable both for ability and character, and all of whom accomplished no in-

considerable amount of solid and useful work, although their services are no longer remembered, and, with the exception of Schlözer, their very names are omitted from our best English biographical dictionaries. Never were there more conscientious labourers. They spared no toil to make their work substantial. If they have ever been surpassed in industry and accuracy of research, which may be doubted, it has only been by a few authors belonging to the school of history founded by Savigny and Niebuhr, or, in other words, by men whose advantages and resources were vastly greater. And their impartiality was not inferior to their industry. In fact, the indefatigable industry, which is their most obvious characteristic, had its motive cause in a love of truth as pure as it was earnest, not less free from prejudice than capable of toil and sacrifice. They showed these merits of industry and impartiality chiefly in two spheres, the history of particular provinces and princely families, and the history of foreign peoples. They did comparatively little directly for general German history, but it was because there was either none or only what was a grief and distraction to look on. English scholars preceded those of Germany in the study of the histories of foreign peoples; but from 1772, the date of the publication of Schlözer's 'Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte,' the latter have probably surpassed in this field all competitors. It was a field in which Mascov had already done excellent service.[1]

The spread of the so-called German Illuminism, a continuation of the French Illuminism, gave rise to other views regarding the historical art. Learned research became less valued, while beauty of form, elegance of composition, came to be considered indispensable. Less industry was manifested in research,—more attention was given to arrangement and style. Thus far, perhaps, the gain scarcely balanced the loss. There was, however, another and greater than merely æsthetic gain. History was seen in a new light. The fact that it had been pervaded by general ideas began to be realised. A growth of culture, of enlightened reflection and social refinement, was discerned to have pervaded the ages, and many began to think

[1] Mascov's 'History of the Ancient Germans and other Northern Nations' was translated into English by Thomas Lediard in 1738.

that the true aim, or at least the highest aim, of the historian must be to trace the course and progress of that growth. It was during this period, which embraced the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first decade of the nineteenth century, that the notion of there being a philosophy of history dawned on the German mind, and it is remarkable by how many persons it was apprehended about the same time. In the quarter of a century which preceded the French Revolution, Iselin, Wegelin, Schlözer, Müller, Lessing, Herder, Kant, and Schiller, all tried to trace the outlines of the plan which underlies universal human history, and to discover and exhibit its central thought. There could scarcely be a more striking confirmation of Bacon's words, "Truth has been rightly named the daughter of Time." The two most representative historians of the period were the celebrated Johannes von Müller and the still more celebrated Friedrich Schiller.

In Germany, as in France, it was the writers of the age of illumination who definitively freed historical composition from theological thraldom and scholastic pedantry and formalism, and raised it to the dignity of an independent department of literature; who breathed life into its dry bones, and clothed them with flesh fair to see; who presented it as a manifestation of humanity and its culture, and thereby gave it present and permanent interest for human beings as such, for men as men. But while they saw a meaning in history previously unperceived, they failed to estimate aright the depth at which it lay and the difficulties of reaching it, and so felt very inadequately the necessity of laborious and critical research. They went little below the surface, did not penetrate into the depths of past human existence and try earnestly by study and experience of life to realise what had taken place in them; but accepted hastily a few easily formed generalisations about progress, freedom, culture, humanity, as the essential truths of history, the substance of its whole teaching, while they remained still devoid of any but the most superficial notions of these things, progress, freedom, culture, humanity. History itself, however, soon began to teach the Germans the superficiality of their notions on these subjects in a severe and bitter but effective way. They

had come to fancy the principle of true culture to be the enthusiasm of humanity, a passionate vague love of man as man, in which patriotism and other particular affections are absorbed and lost. Many even of the men who did most to found German nationality regarded national feeling as but another name for an irrational prejudice. Frederick the Great did so; Lessing confessed he could not understand what patriotism meant; Goethe and Hegel were devoid of it; Schiller said it was chiefly of importance for unripe nations and the youth of the world, but that thoughtful men could not grow warm over a particular nation, except in so far as its fortunes influence the progress of the species; and Fichte, very shortly before the battle of Jena, declared that only a mere earth-born man would mourn over the fall of his country, and that a man of true culture would ever regard the nation whose culture was highest as the real fatherland and home of his spirit. But the shame of actual national humiliation and the discipline of national suffering taught the Germans the shallowness of their cosmopolitanism and its culture, and the value of national feeling and life; taught them to study themselves, to seek to know and be themselves, to get down to the roots of their weakness that they might root them out, and to the roots of their strength that they might understand how to develop them. And the whole world knows how amply they have profited by the teaching, and how nobly they have developed their resources in the most manifold forms of literature, science, art, and action,—certainly not least in the department of history.

Since "the storm broke loose and the people rose" in the war of liberation, far more historical works of sterling merit have been written in Germany than in all the rest of the world together during the same period. There is not a corner of the vast field of history where the scholars of Germany are not to be found labouring in greater numbers and with more fidelity and success than those of any other nation. If we think of oriental and classical history, Plath and Lassen, Movers and Ewald, Lepsius, Brugsch, and Bunsen, Von Hammer-Purgstall and Weil, Boeckh, O. Müller, and Curtius, Niebuhr, Mommsen, and Ihne, are the sort of names which recur to us; if of the mid-

dle ages, Savigny, the brothers Grimm, Pertz, Leo, Giesebrecht, Von Maurer, K. Hegel, &c.; if of later times, Schlosser, Gervinus, Ranke, Von Sybel, and a great host of others so kindred in spirit and equally matched in talent that to choose among them seems invidious. Every modern country has had light thrown on its history by German research—as, for instance, our own by the studies of Dahlman, and Lappenberg, and Pauli, and Ranke, and Gneist, and Fischel. Almost every branch of science, physical and mental, has had its history worthily described by Germans. The history of philosophy, for example, has been investigated by Hegel, Ritter, Zeller, Stöckl, Erdmann, Fischer, and a multitude of others. For every one ecclesiastical historian which France or England could produce, Germany could produce fifty as good or better.

The fundamental principle of the great historical school founded in Germany by Niebuhr and Savigny, is national individuality: its essential characteristics are aversion to imposing on history general ideas and constructions, or deducing from it systems of abstract propositions; a desire to penetrate into the character of each people as if it were a concrete personality; an endeavour to comprehend and trace each stage of the historical movement as a stage of organic growth or natural evolution; and a faithful and critical use of the primary sources of information. It may have dealt with history in a one-sided way,—its aversion to general ideas may have been due, at least in part, to inability to apprehend them,—and it may have shown an excessive jealousy towards historical philosophy except in the somewhat puerile form of a comparison of national development to the organic growth of the individual man; but whatever may be its faults, they have arisen mainly from the very intensity of the desire of those who have belonged to it thoroughly to sift and master the subject on which they happened to be engaged, from the very concentration of their faculties on their task; and it is only through such works as those which they have produced that the true philosophy of universal history, which is nothing else than its true comprehension, can be gradually evolved. The special and the particular must be gone through before real philosophical generality can be reached. The cosmopolitanism

of view which ignores or denies national differences is false; the true cosmopolitanism presupposes them, and while rising above them rises out of them. The chief error of historical philosophers has been overlooking this fact, and supposing that the race could be known while the nations and generations which constituted it were not; or, in other words, that the philosophy of history lay on the near instead of on the far side of history itself.

I must not go farther or more minutely, however, into the history of the historical art in Germany, but must turn to my proper theme, the history of historical science or philosophy.

CHAPTER II.

THE RISE OF HISTORICAL PHILOSOPHY IN GERMANY: LEIBNITZ, ISELIN, WEGELIN, SCHLÖZER, VON MÜLLER.

I.

LEIBNITZ (1646-1716) was gifted, as very few have been, with all the faculties required in a great historical philosopher. He possessed powers of endurance and labour rarely equalled, and exercised them with an assiduity and energy which made him even early in life undoubtedly one of the most learned men that have ever lived; and his extraordinary industry and erudition were united with the keenest insight, the profoundest reflection, and the highest speculative originality. He possessed almost all endowments of mind, even those which are seldom combined in the same individual, in wondrous perfection, and with far more truth than Lord Bacon he might have said, "I have taken all knowledge for my province." Aristotle alone, in fact, in the history of thought, can be compared with him for universality of intellect and intellectual acquisition. Mathematics, metaphysics, theology, languages, law, history, politics, geology, chemistry, medicine, all came alike to him. He had a corresponding catholicity of spirit which led him to seek a soul of truth and good in all things, and to endeavour to combine, conciliate, and harmonise the most diverse systems. He was the first, and, Hegel excepted, the greatest of modern eclectics. It is impossible not to regret that he has nowhere treated directly of a science which he was so singularly fitted to advance, although he has done so much for so many sciences that it appears like ingratitude even to wish that he had done either more or otherwise than he did.[1]

[1] For a list of biographies of Leibnitz, editions of his works, and treatises on his philosophy, see Ueberweg's 'Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie der

Notwithstanding his not having directly treated of the philosophy of history, Leibnitz has rendered it valuable services, or at least has exercised considerable influence on it. He did much, as has been already said, for history itself; and directly to advance the study of history is mediately to advance the study of the science of history. So far as I know, he was the first to combine on a scale of any considerable magnitude history and philology, which is as important in historical science as the combination of algebra and geometry in mathematics. The whole spirit of his philosophy was historical. It was the first philosophy which was profoundly historical in spirit. It was so in its comprehensiveness and catholicity, uniting not only immediately Cartesianism and the Aufklärung, but mediately the whole past and future of the history of reason. It was so, likewise, in some of its essential principles and distinctive tenets—as, for example, in its doctrine of a world-law of analogy resting on the individuation and specification of the monads; in the apprehension of life as everywhere present, everywhere related to all other life, and everywhere a development; in the importance assigned to the law of continuity, of an unbroken gradation of organisms, the non-existence of any break in the order of dependent beings; and in the general theory of pre-established harmony and its special form of optimism. These views have all been carried, since Leibnitz wrote, into historical speculation. As Leibnitz himself, however, did not make an historical application of them, it would be out of place to discuss that application of them here. To consider them in themselves would be still more so, and would, besides, involve the investigation of the whole Leibnitzian system.

Perhaps the theory of optimism may claim to be in some degree an exception; for although Leibnitz did not attempt to

Neuzeit,' Dritte Auflage, 106-109. The best biography is that of Guhrauer; the most convenient edition of his philosophical works that of Erdmann; the best editions of his whole works are those of Pertz, De Careil, and Klopp, but all three are still incomplete; the ablest and most accurate accounts of his philosophy are those given by Erdmann ('Darstellung der Geschichte der neuern Philosophie,' Bd. ii. Abth. ii), Nourisson ('La Philosophie de Leibnitz'), Kuno Fischer ('Geschichte der neuern Philosophie,' Bd. ii.), and Zeller ('Geschichte der deutschen Philosophie,' Erster Abschnitt.) Pfleiderer's G. W. Leibnitz, als Patriot, Staatsmann, und Bildungsträger (1870), is an interesting book.

prove it by means of history, and was not apparently influenced by it in his mode of writing history, he so stated and illustrated it as to have clearly suggested historical optimism, which, in fact, is but the consistent and thorough introduction into history of his thought that the best of all possible worlds is one which abounds in crimes like those of Sextus Tarquinius,—that if Sextus had lived contented with a moderate fortune at Corinth, or been a wise and virtuous king in Thrace, the world must necessarily have been worse than it has been, notwithstanding the enormous iniquities of the Sextus who ruled at Rome. It is scarcely necessary to say that the historical illustration gives not the slightest confirmation to the theory, for history affords no warrant whatever for belief of the assertion which it involves. History knows the actual Tarquin of the actual world, but it knows nothing of possible Tarquins in possible worlds. Only to a very superficial and inaccurate glance will it seem that the crimes of Tarquin contributed much to Roman freedom and power, and that they contributed anything was due to their eliciting the action of forces which many other things might have excited and impelled in a better way. The optimism of Leibnitz has some decided advantages over the optimism of Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and Pope; but it is equally hypothetical, and the only real argument for it is the theological one,—"The world is the best possible, because God is infinitely powerful, wise, and good." It is an argument in which I confess I can discover little force. Is there not just as much reason for saying that the world cannot be so good but that God could have made it better because He is thus infinite? He is infinite, and the world is finite,—the distance between His goodness and any degree of goodness the world can have must be infinite,—and to say that it is as good as He could make it, however good He may have made it, would appear to involve the supposition that His power is limited. In fact, it almost seems as if here were a case where, turn to which side you please, there meets you the horn of a dilemma. If, says the optimist, the world is not the best possible, God cannot be all-good. Grant that; but then, if the world be the best possible, God cannot be all-powerful. The latter inference seems to be as good as the former. And per-

haps the true inference is, that we are reasoning in a region too high for us; that our reasoning being about the infinite, our conclusions are really not much worth one way or another. At the same time I think the difficulty raised by the optimist the lesser difficulty. The inference for the goodness of God is secure, I think, if the original constitution of all things, if all things as made by God be very good, whether the best possible or not; but I cannot conceive how the power, wisdom, and goodness there is in the present or any finite universe can be the highest possible expression of a power, wisdom, and goodness which are infinite.[1]

It was only, as has been already said, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, that the idea of there being a philosophy of history dawned on the German mind. It was one of the many ideas which Germany about this time derived from France. Herr Rosenkranz has denied this, but it is nevertheless true; and nothing but national prejudice could have led him to attribute the opinion to French 'Levity and Vanity.' The two first authors in Germany who attempted to subject history to philosophy were both natives of Switzerland, a country which has long been and still is influential as an intellectual medium between France and Germany. These two authors were Iselin and Wegelin.[2]

[1] On the optimism of Leibnitz see, besides the already mentioned works of Erdmann, Nourisson, Fischer, and Zeller, the treatises of Bilfinger ('De Origine et Permissione Mali,' 1724) and Baumeister ('Historia Doctrinæ de Optimo Mundo,' 1741); Kant, 'Uber den Optimismus' and 'Uber das Misslingen aller philosophischen Versuche in der Theodicee; Chalmers, 'Natural Theology' (Book v. ch. ii.); Bonifas, Étude sur la Theodicée de Leibnitz;' and Pichler, 'Die Theologie des Leibnitz.'

[2] The earliest work in German professing to expound the principles of a science of history, with which I am acquainted, was published by John Martin Chladni in 1752. It has been quite overlooked even by the Germans. The author was of Hungarian extraction, and of a family several of whose members distinguished themselves in science, the most celebrated, perhaps, being Ernst Chladni, the great discoverer in experimental acoustics. John Martin Chladni wrote, in addition to his 'Allgemeine Geschichtswissenschaft,' a 'Philosophia Nova Definitiva,' a 'Logica Practica,' and two volumes of 'Opuscula Academica;' but these are also unknown even to the German historians of philosophy. The 'Allg. Geschichtswissenschaft' does not answer to its name. Its subject is not history itself, but historical investigation and exposition. It is what the Germans now call an 'Historik.' Dr Chladni fully believed himself to be laying in it the foundation of a science entirely new and infinitely important. In the

II.

Isaak Iselin (1728-82) was a highly genial, kindly, and cultivated man; keenly alive to the claims of justice and the charms of benevolence; a sincere seeker after truth, and an indefatigable disseminator of it. He was a zealous advocate of the views on education associated with the names of Rousseau and Basedow, the reforms in criminal legislation demanded by Beccaria, the truths in practical politics promulgated by Montesquieu, and the economical doctrines of Quesnay. The fervent love of truth, virtue, and his fellow-men, which characterised him, pervades with a most pleasing warmth his 'Versuch über die gesellschaftliche Ordnung,' 'Träume eines Menschenfreundes,' 'Ephemeriden der Menscheit,' and all his other works; but none of them more so than that which claims our attention, the two volumes of 'Philosophische Muthmassungen über die Geschichte der Menscheit' (Philosophical Conjectures on the History of Humanity), published in 1764.

It has for motto these lines from Pope:—

> "Let us, since life can little more supply,
> Than just to look about us and to die,
> Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man."

And "expatiate free o'er all this scene of man" is precisely what it does. It consists of six books, and each book contains many chapters, all short, some very short, one consisting of only two sentences, as in Montesquieu; so that a vast number of subjects are

preface he expresses the conviction that his life has been providentially guided to this end, and states how he supposes his various changes and situations, his offices at the university of Wittenberg, his duties as lecturer on Church Antiquities at Leipsig, as director of the gymnasium at Coburg, and finally as 'ordentlicher Professor der Gotteslahrheit, der Beredsamkeit und der Poesie, wie auch Pastor an der Universitätskirche' at Erlangen, had all led him to it, and prepared him for it. The work consists of twelve chapters, which treat respectively of the following themes: 1°, Historical knowledge in general; 2°, The movements of bodies; 3°, The movements of moral beings; 4°, The movements of men and histories; 5°, The spectator and the point of view; 6°, The alteration which history suffers in the telling of it; 7°, The diffusion and propagation of history; 8°, The connection of events and historical causation; 9°, Historical certainty; 10°, Historical probability; 11°, Ancient and foreign histories; and 12°, Future things, and rules in conjecturing.

touched upon, while, unfortunately, none are studied with adequate depth and fulness. It is neither a philosophically elaborated whole, nor a series of connected investigations, but an extremely rapid succession of remarks, loosely put together under a few general heads, on the immense variety of matters presented by "this scene of man."

The first book professes to be a psychological consideration of man. It is not, however, an analysis of his mind into elementary or primary principles, and still less such a study of these as is needed to lay a solid psychological foundation for an historical theory. It is merely a series of remarks, interesting and well put, but not in the least scientific, on the more obvious aspects, properties, and relations of the soul. It is considerably more desultory and less analytic than even the first part of Ferguson's 'Essay on the History of Civil Society'—that on "The general characteristics of human nature,"—while it corresponds to it, and may profitably be compared with it.

The second book treats of the state of nature. By that expression some philosophers have meant the simplest and lowest state a man can be in, remaining man, and others the best state a man can be in, the state most conformed to the character of his constitution; and these latter philosophers have often supposed that they refuted the former by showing that what was affirmed of the state of nature in the first sense was not true of it in the second, not seeing that even if they proved such to be the case they only established what needed no proof, and what nobody ever denied—viz., that *man's worst estate is not his best.* Dr Ferguson, for instance, fell into the error, and actually supposed it to be a relevant objection to Hobbes's hypothesis of the state of nature being a state of war out of which men contrived to escape by combination and mutual concessions to say, that the state of nature had never ceased, and was as well represented by the most polished Parisian as by the rudest savage; and Cousin and others have referred to this reply with approbation. Iselin deserves some credit for not having fallen into this error. Without explicitly distinguishing the two meanings of the phrase "state of nature," he does so virtually by proceeding throughout on the correct supposition that the second signifi-

cation is irrelevant to the investigation he has in hand, and that the real questions he has to resolve in this second book are, What is the lowest or simplest condition in which man can be supposed to have lived? and what are the conditions next in order through which he must have passed, in ascending from it to his present place in civilisation?

He thinks man could not have existed with merely the use of his senses, and a susceptibility to present pleasure and pain; but must even in his lowest state have had both foresight and memory to some extent, with corresponding aversions and desires, although only for sensible things. In this state there would be no sense of property, no sentiment of decency or duty, no general notions, and no speech. Whether it ever actually existed is doubtful; if it did we ought not to regret, like Rousseau, that it has passed away, or deem the capacity of progress which distinguishes man from the beasts an evil endowment, manifesting itself in carrying us from freedom and happiness instead of towards them. The second stage is described by Iselin as a little higher than a merely animal condition—as one in which man begins to recognise distinctions where before all was confusion, to have a few comparatively steady feelings, the first germs of general notions, and the weak beginnings of speech. He admits that the characteristics of this stage are united in no single people of which we have heard; but thinks that they may be found scattered among several, and, indeed, endeavours to trace and collect them. There comes next the simplest phase of social life, that of nomad shepherds, with rudimentary notions of truth and justice, the first promptings of those feelings which eventually lead to married love and domestic order, a language somewhat developed, and a larger measure of happiness than their predecessors had enjoyed.

From this point, according to Iselin, history divides itself into two channels, the human race into two classes. The simple shepherd life may serve as a transition either to civilisation or barbarism: in itself it would naturally lead to the former; but it may also tempt the tribes of rude hunters which must form on the mountains and in the woods to plunder, destroy, and enslave their peaceful and more prosperous neighbours, and this

will bring the state of nature to an end, and introduce the savage state, so extensively prevalent even at the present day. The state of nature may never have existed in any of its phases; the savage or barbarian state is too well known to us. It must be studied and compared with the civilised state, and to this purpose Herr Iselin has devoted the whole of his third book. His delineation of the peculiarities of savage life was meritorious at the date he wrote; but, of course, does not satisfy us now in the days of Lubbock and Quatrefages. The distinction between the state of nature and the savage state is itself untenable.

The second volume is entirely occupied with the consideration of the civilised state, the three books of which it consists treating respectively of civilisation among the peoples of the East, among the Greeks and Romans, and in the nations of modern Europe. Religion, morals, government, law, arts, language, literature, and learning, the changes they undergo, the influence which certain great events have exerted on them, their action on one another, are all spoken of in connection with each of these epochs of historical time, the oriental, classical, and modern, and generally in a just and interesting way, but nothing is examined thoroughly, and still less is the whole organised into a science or elevated into a philosophy. Iselin's aim, in fact, is throughout not speculative but practical. He seeks to find in history not scientific laws but moral lessons.[1]

III.

Jacob Daniel Wegelin is an important name in the history of our science. He was born at St Gallen in 1721. In 1765 he became Professor of History at the Royal "Ritterakademie" of Berlin, as also Archivarius and Member of the Royal Academy

[1] It is amusing to find Professor Doergens, of Heidelberg (see his 'Aristoteles,' 12), speak of Iselin as "der erste namhafte Philosoph der Geschichte"—after Orosius. Now, even if we consent to sacrifice Vico and Bossuet because they founded on theology, what are we to say, for example, of Turgot, who wrote about a quarter of a century earlier than Iselin, and with far more profundity and comprehensiveness? Our German friends are no less given to calling their geese swans than the French, who are much more credited with the practice.

of Sciences, and from that time to his death in 1791, he was incessantly occupied with publications on historical subjects. Frederick the Great held him in high esteem both as a man and a thinker, and usually spoke of him as the second Montesquieu. The year after his death a biography of him was published at St Gallen by J. M. Fels, a native of that town. It is curious how entirely his merits in the department of historical philosophy have passed into oblivion even in Germany. The sole exception to the general ignorance of which I am aware is only partial. Herr Rosenkranz, in his interesting *brochure*, entitled, 'What the Germans have done for the Philosophy of History,' published in 1835, called attention to the solid and admirable character of Wegelin's work on the philosophy of history in the Mémoires of the Berlin Academy, translated into German twelve paragraphs of the first memoir, and the headings of the other paragraphs to the end of the second memoir, and stated that he had ten years before purposed translating the whole; yet, notwithstanding all this, he supposed the whole to consist of two memoirs, whereas it really consists of five. He makes no mention of Wegelin's other works in the same department.

The following are at least the most important of them:—

'Considérations sur les Principes Moraux et Caractéristiques des Gouvernements,' 1766. Wegelin here tries to trace the growth of government through its various forms from man's rudest to his most refined condition. In this attempt his chief aim is to discover in each civil constitution its central and organising principle, its life or spirit. His success, I think, is unfortunately not what could have been wished. In the first chapter he describes the savage state; in the second, those civil constitutions which seem to him to have been based chiefly on merely natural impressions or impulses—*e.g.*, the Egyptian on wonder, the Babylonian on the desire of pleasure, the Chinese on filial reverence, and the Persian on love for the native soil; in the third, those which he regards as having been grounded mainly in moral habit or reflection—*e.g.*, the Phœnician in self-interest, the Carthaginian in the spirit of mercantile conquest, and the Dutch in that of national diligence; in the fourth, he

treats of religion in its relation to the state as a source of political principles; and he concludes with the particular discussion of several civil constitutions.

'Plan Raisonné d'une Histoire Universelle et Diplomatique de l'Europe depuis Charlemagne jusqu'à l'an 1740,' 1769. This work begins with an inquiry into the nature of the task which the universal historian has to discharge. He must master the original documents. He must judge of actions and agents. He must avail himself of analogy and induction; the former being the process of discovering resemblances between persons or events, and the latter the art of rising from particular facts to general conclusions. The rest of the treatise is the exposition of how, in the opinion of Wegelin, the principles of the historical method should be applied. He afterwards sought to exemplify them still further in a learned and able work in six volumes, the 'Histoire Universelle et Diplomatique de l'Europe depuis la Chute de l'Empire Romain jusqu'à l'an 987,' where his incessant preoccupation is obviously seen to be the discovery of causes, and of the influence exerted by events on the progress of ideas and the welfare of communities.

'Briefe über den Werth der Geschichte,' 1783. These thirty letters treat of a great many interesting questions relative to history as an art. Among Wegelin's contributions to the volumes of the Berlin Academy the following merit to be mentioned in a work like the present:—

5 Mémoires sur la Philosophie de l'Histoire. 1770, 1772, 1773, 1775, and 1776.

3 Mémoires sur l'Art Caractéristique, Psychologique, Politique et Morale de Tacite.

1 Mémoire sur l'Histoire considérée comme la Satyre du Genre Humain.

1 Mémoire sur le Cours Periodique des Evènements.

Among the various works which he left in MS. were two, entitled, (1), 'Betrachtung über die philosophische Erkentniss und Anwendung der Geschichte;' and (2), 'Fünftzehn Abhandlungen über die Belehrende Geschichte.' I do not know whether they were ever printed, or whether they now exist.

The five Memoirs on the Philosophy of History compose a

treatise which well merits republication, displaying, as it everywhere does, vigour and clearness of thought, analytic and generalising ability, an extensive familiarity with historical facts, and careful reflection on historical method. It has, however, no grace or charm of style to recommend it; on the contrary, it is in that respect extremely arid and uninteresting. Nor, with all its merits, can it be properly said to be a philosophy of history, or even a part of such a philosophy; it is merely a work *about* the philosophy of history, a series of general thoughts *concerning* history and its study; it never allows us to forget the "*sur*" in its title. The reflections of which it consists are, further, only externally, not organically connected, which makes it impossible to give an abstract or summary of them, with the brevity here demanded. I can do little more than indicate what are the chief subjects discussed.

M. Wegelin, in the opening paragraphs of his first memoir, describes philosophy as comprehending all the universal notions by which objects are connected, states that the principal ideas which enter into the moral world, and consequently into history, are those of assimilation and concatenation, general, particular, and individual reasons, indefinite continuity and indefinite diversity, living forces and dead forces; and distinguishes the notions with which metaphysics is conversant from those with which history has to do by saying, that while the former are abstract and refer exclusively to the essential and universal relationships of things, the latter are collective, including all that goes to determine and constitute a fact; so that the philosophy of history, although a series of notions, is based on the modifications and succession of the facts themselves.

He then treats at considerable length of what he calls the "concatention of the facts" (*enchaînure des faits*). And perhaps no portion of his work is superior in interest to that devoted to this discussion. Probably no one before him had expressed so well the great truth, that beneath the system of outward or visible facts of history there is ever a system of intellectual principles, of regulative thoughts, combining, pervading, and determining it; a mass of ideas which are organically bound together, which can only be slowly produced and modified; and

that what is essential and substantial in history, must be sought in the character and development of ideas. The way in which he has pointed out that the changes which take place within a nation are due to the separate or combined action of a law of universality and a law of individuality, of the coactive force of the state and the reactive force of personal freedom in its members, the one producing what may be called a centripetal and the other a centrifugal movement, while the right adjustment of the two secures movement in a safe and regular orbit, is only less admirable. His remarks on the different kinds of concatenation between facts, on the different sorts of series into which events may be ranged, on the employment of the series in universal history, and on the influence of moral and political interests and actions on each other, are worthy of consideration.

M. Wegelin next takes up the subject of historical analysis, which he somewhat strangely divides into the analysis of facts and the analysis of events, the former being simply the chronological arrangement of what has happened, the latter the reference of what has happened to its originating principles or reasons. He remarks on the difficulties which history presents to analysis, sometimes owing to the abundance, and sometimes owing to the paucity, of its data.

All that he has said of concatenation and analysis implying that there is in history a part which comprehends principles, reasons, intellectual grounds, he proceeds to treat of these in relation both to the agent and the action. He tells us how we ought to judge of the character and conduct of the actors in history, and that, abstracting this relationship, historical facts may require to be referred either to general reasons—those which are common to several different series of facts; particular reasons—those which arise from the antagonism of conflicting general principles, and originate a distinct intermediate series of actions; and individual reasons—the relation of facts to the entire combination of circumstances which make them to be what they are. The illustrations which he adduces of these "reasons" are probably more valuable than their definitions.

In the concluding part of this memoir, Wegelin discourses of what he calls the *phenomena* of history, meaning thereby the

specially characteristic incidents of history, those which so light up for us the past or present as to let us see their true spirit and significance. An eye for such phenomena is the distinctive gift of the historian. An historical picture is but their collection and arrangement. Our author considers them under the heads of psychological, moral, and political phenomena: the first class being those which cast light on the intellectual character of an individual or people; the second, on the state of men's sentiments, affections, and habits; and the third, on the constitution and tendencies of a government. He would subordinate psychological and moral to political phenomena by regarding the political reasons of the latter as *the final causes* of all the intellectual and practical activity of men. He thus falls into the old Greek and Roman error of sacrificing the individual to the state and viewing "ethics as a sort of politics." It is scarcely necessary to refute this antiquated notion. It in no way follows that, because man is not made to live alone, and the state includes individuals, man is made for the good of the state, and the good of the state must be a nobler and more comprehensive thing than that of the individual. The state is made for man, not man for the state. The citizen does not comprehend the man, but the man the citizen. The state is but the expression of a phase of human nature. The political is in every respect subordinate to the ethical; the ethical is in the main independent of the political.

The second memoir shows that Leibnitz had exercised a decided influence on the mind of Wegelin. Indeed it is little more than the application to history of two principles which Leibnitz had rendered celebrated. The first is that which Wegelin calls the law of the indefinite diversity of historical facts, and which is simply a particular form of the Leibnitzian *principium indiscernibilium*. No two things in the world, said Leibnitz, are quite alike. And especially, adds Wegelin, no two historical facts are quite alike. Of course, he has no difficulty in proving his proposition; in showing that the facts of the moral world differ from one another in a greater number of respects than those of the physical world; that if it be vain to hope to find any two leaves of the same tree precisely similar, still more

vain must it be to hope to find any two acts of a man or nation precisely similar. But while the truth of the conclusion cannot be called in question, its value, I fear, not unreasonably may. Wegelin pronounces it a rich and faithful principle. To me it seems, at least as far as science is concerned, a poor and barren affirmation. It explains nothing in history; it is an abuse of terms to speak of it, as M. Wegelin does, as *a law* of history. A law is a definite connection between facts; but to say that no two facts of a certain kind are alike, is certainly not to state a definite connection between any two facts of that kind. The *principium indiscernibilium* is in every form and reference a deception when passed off either as a law or an explanation. It states definite connection between no two facts whatever; it accounts for no one fact whatever. Principle is a word so general that we need not refuse to apply it either to the proposition of Leibnitz or Wegelin; but law is a title to which neither has the slightest claim.

The other principle which Leibnitz enunciated in a general form, and Wegelin applied to history, is that called by the latter the principle of indefinite continuity. This principle also is no law. When it has been established with reference to any class of facts, a connection merely is proved to exist between these facts, not the definite connection which alone constitutes law. It is, however, a far more important service to establish the principle of continuity than that of diversity; in some departments, and especially in history, it may be a most important service. If continuity is not a law, it is nevertheless a condition of law, and an indication of law; an assurance that law will ultimately be found. Where we cannot make out the definite connection between things, we may still have much reason to be thankful for being able to make out a connection between them. The comparative method of research has of late, in the hands of ethnologists, philologists, historians, &c., thrown great light on what was previously obscure in human development, by proving continuity to exist where there had hitherto appeared to be a breach of continuity; and no wise man will despise or depreciate that light because it is not still greater than it is, and seldom reveals to us the law, but merely the fact

of continuous evolution. It must be allowed, then, I think, to have been a decided merit in Wegelin that he laid so much stress as he did on the notion of continuity in historical development, on the persistence or permanence of principles, the slow modification of the ideas and feelings which determine the form and actions of societies. With the most genuine thoughtfulness, and with many apt illustrations, he proved what is a most important truth (how important only those who have long reflected on the subject can realise), that there is very little of abrupt transition in the history of nations, forms of government, systems of religion, moral convictions, or social usages.

In the latter part of this memoir, M. Wegelin divides the forces of the moral world into two classes or groups: the first including all those motives and tendencies which prompt men to self-activity, to independent courses of speculation and conduct, to innovation and invention; and the second, all those workings of sympathy, authority, antiquity, imitation, association, and love of ease and quiet, which lead men to rest with satisfaction in what is already established, which show that

> "Out of the common is man's nature framed,
> And custom is the nurse to which he cleaves."

The former, the progressive principles in history, he connects with the principle of diversity, and calls the *living forces* of society; the latter, the conservative principles in history, he connects with the principle of continuity, and calls the *dead forces* of society. The terms living and dead forces are obviously about the most infelicitous that could have been selected, but the phraseology has exerted little, if any, influence for evil on the author's thoughts; and his remarks on the forces or principles themselves, and on their modes of action and interaction are, on the whole, excellent. He falls, however, into one radical error, seeing that he regards the principle of diversity and continuity, and consequently the forces of progression and conservation, as entirely separate, and, indeed, as purely antagonistic. They appear to him distinctly to divide, as it were, the moral world between them, so that each of its forces belongs definitely and exclusively either to the one or the other. Now

that is an undoubtedly mistaken view. Diversity and continuity, progress and order, are so little wholly separate, so little opposed, that the latter is a condition of the former. They are only separated and opposed in the thoughts of those who conceive of them in a one-sided and exaggerated manner. But, then, they are so frequently conceived of in that manner, that we need not wonder at M. Wegelin's error, which, indeed, is still prevalent, and has been so long and generally accepted, that, for an adequate refutation of it, we have to refer to the pages of a distinguished thinker of our own day, the late Mr J. S. Mill, who has very ably shown, in the second chapter of his 'Representative Government,' that "the requisites of progress are but the requisites of order in a greater degree; those of permanence merely those of progress in a somewhat smaller measure;" — that "progress of any kind includes permanence in that same kind; whenever permanence is sacrificed to some particular kind of progress, other progress is still more sacrificed to it; and if it be not worth the sacrifice, not the interest of permanence alone has been disregarded, but the general interest of progress has been mistaken;"—that "the very same social causes—the same beliefs, feelings, institutions, and practices—are as much required to prevent society from retrograding, as to produce a further advance."

The third memoir is somewhat miscellaneous in its contents, and I shall merely mention what are the chief subjects which it deals with. The first is political history, the history of the state; and the state is regarded as having its centre of unity and root of growth in a constitution, which may be either vague and indeterminate, as having arisen from a fortuitous conjunction of circumstances or of peoples—or precise and determinate, as the deliberate work of legislative wisdom; and in this latter case the precision and determinateness may rest either on the principle of diversity or of continuity, either on the exclusion of certain classes from participation in the power of government, as at Rome, or on the inclusion of all under a uniform law and system of life, as at Sparta. M. Wegelin endeavours to indicate how states thus differing in constitution may be expected to differ in development; argues that in order to trace

the courses of their movement, it would be of use to generalise the methods employed by geometers in the analysis and determination of curves; and maintains a truth which M. Guizot has had the merit of rendering popular—viz., that the political history of the East has been much more simple, much less varied and complicated, than that of the West. He next makes a number of observations on the character of the history of the Church, of the several forms of Church government, heresies, &c. Having done so, he passes to the consideration of the history of what he calls "la police," taking the word in a very broad sense as the administration of all the resources which a nation applies to the amelioration of its condition. He then, still more cursorily, discourses of the history of philosophy, the history of physical science, the history of morals, and the history of taste, —all departments of the history of the mind of man. He is thence led to speak of the peculiarities of understanding and genius which are required for the advancement of these different kinds of knowledge. And he concludes the memoir with a few remarks on character, how it is modified, and how it may be analysed.

The most interesting part of the fourth memoir, at least to the student of historical philosophy, is probably that consisting of the first six paragraphs or sections. It is in substance a general but distinct exposition of the truth to which Mr Lecky justly assigns so much importance—viz., that the beliefs of a given age or people are mainly determined not by definite reasons or arguments, but by the general intellectual conditions of the society,—conditions which can only be slowly brought about and slowly modified by the combined operation of all the forces of civilisation. In the state of nature—that is, when destitute of culture—man, argues M. Wegelin, is almost passive under the rule of the laws of physical and animal life, incapable of conceiving anything better than the condition he is in, impressible through his imagination but not through his judgment. With the growth of reason social changes come to be accomplished by reason, but the reason of individuals is always to a great extent determined in its actions by the general habits of thought and feeling which prevail in their generation. In each community

the conflict of parties and opinions produces a sort of common sense, proper and peculiar to that community, which influences the conduct of all who belong to it and its whole public history. In each nation the spirit or principle of its constitution gives a character to its conduct throughout its entire existence. Particular causes are always and in many respects conditioned, directed, and controlled by general causes. There follows a group of seven sections which tell us how we may so analyse a political constitution as to ascertain what its spirit is, what natural principles a government must conform to in order to be good and durable, and how patriotic sentiment is modified by the distribution of dignities and by the characters of individuals.

From this point M. Wegelin enters on a discussion as to the method of historical research and the credibility and worth of its results, which occupies the rest of the fourth and the whole of the fifth memoir. It will be referred to again when I require to consider the logic of history; at present it may be sufficient to say that it was for the time when it appeared a valuable contribution to that department of study.

IV.

A. L. von Schlözer (1735-1809) was a far greater historian than either of the two authors who have just passed under our review. He was a man of unwearied diligence, of unresting and varied activity, who brought strong faculties to bear on many subjects,—theology, language, statistics, the organisation of the political sciences, history, &c.,—and who wrote and edited a great number of learned books. On history especially he conferred services of the highest merit by his laborious researches into the history of Northern Europe, and particularly of Russia. His 'Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte,' published so early as 1772, was a work of which his country had reason to be proud. I do not know that any other country had at that date so good a history of its neighbours.

The work, however, which falls to be noticed here is not important, and will not detain us long. It is his 'Vorstellung der universal Historie,' published at Göttingen in 1772-73.

It consists of two parts. The first part is an outline of universal history, which is divided into five ages,—viz., 1°, the Primal World, extending from Adam to Noah, a period of 1656 years; 2°, the Fore World, extending from Noah to Cyrus, a period of 1770 years; 3°, the Ancient World, from Cyrus to Clovis, the founder of the kingdom of the Franks, 1000 years; 4°, the Medieval World, from Clovis to Columbus, 1000 years; and 5°, the Modern World, from Columbus to the present time (the publication of Schlözer's book) 300 years. Each of these ages is treated of under eight heads. First, its duration and limits are described; next, its divisions, larger and smaller; then, the peoples which belonged to it; further, its geography and what was known thereof; afterwards, the sources, monuments, &c.; sixthly, the inventions in arts, sciences, and religion; seventhly, the migrations or diffusion of peoples, animals, plants, arts, maladies; and, finally, there is given a connected view of the historical movement in each age as involving or involved in all these orders of facts.

Anything more stiffly systematic and skeleton-like than this there could not possibly be. And yet there was an "Ideal" underlying it which the author unfolds in an Appendix to Part I. He wished, he there tells us, universal history to include as to matter an account of the revolutions which had taken place in human history, and also on the earth itself, whether through nature or the action of men; and that as to form, it should be to the whole of special histories not unlike what a history of the German empire ought to be to a history of the several German states. It should exclude, he thought, some things which had hitherto found a place in universal histories—viz., all criticism, reasonings, moralisings, all things of secondary importance, and especially all trivialities. At the same time, it should include more, and be more useful, than such histories had previously been. It should comprehend all peoples and states of the world, all times, all events of primary importance, all sorts of truly remarkable things. It should be a history of humanity in essentials; it should contain the elements of all special histories; it should habituate the mind to truer and worthier notions of the greatness of the moral

world, of the nature and power of the forces which move it, and of the comprehensiveness of historical science; and it should throw on all particular facts a light which no mere isolated study of them would yield.[1] Schlözer has also discussed in the same Appendix the proper modes of concatenating events, and of arranging or disposing synchronistically and synthetically the materials of universal history.[2]

It was not to be expected that such an "ideal" would satisfy the soaring ambition and poetical nature of a man like Herder, before whose mind, indeed, a very different "ideal" already gleamed. Not unnaturally, therefore, when Schlözer published that part of his work which has just been described, Herder reviewed it severely in the 'Frankfurter Gel. Anzeiger.' The second part of Schlözer's work is a reply to that review. In it Herder is treated very contemptuously as a mere *littérateur*, incompetent to pass a judgment on historical subjects. It contains nothing of real importance.

Schlözer attempted to realise his "ideal" more fully in a Universal History, published in two volumes in 1785 and 1789, which is one of the earliest Universal Histories in German still readable with satisfaction. I need scarcely say that in no language are there now so many excellent works of the kind. The first by which that of Schlözer was decidedly surpassed was that of a student of his own, the celebrated Swiss historian, Johann von Müller (1752-1809). Müller was a born historian, and from early youth devoted himself heart and soul to historical study. An act of deplorable weakness which he committed near the close of his life—the acceptance of office from Napoleon, whose conduct and aims he had previously denounced with an eloquence which had won for him the admiration of all who loved national freedom and independence—has pressed heavily upon his memory, and often prevented justice being done to his merits. As an historian his merits were undoubtedly very great. A vast memory and inquisitiveness, a vision of wide range and strict truthfulness, imaginative realisation, artistic skill in grouping and disposing facts, an impressive although rather laboured style, eloquence, and a living interest in all that seemed to him

[1] Ideal der Weltgeschichte, Kap. i. [2] K. ii.-iv.

to affect the welfare of men, were among his most marked characteristics. He combined conservative and liberal tendencies, an appreciation of the old and of the new, to an extent rare in his age. He did not dissociate the love of truth, liberty, and humanity, as so many of his contemporaries did, from love of country, respect for the past, and recognition of the claims of domestic and personal duty. He continually insisted that politics ought to be based not on abstract theory but on concrete life, on history and statistics ; that what was needed was not revolution but evolution ; that no social system could endure which was not rooted firmly in the past.

His merits are seen to most advantage in his 'History of Switzerland,' the first volume of which appeared in 1780. This work united, as no German historical work up to that date had done, extensive and accurate research, dignity and beauty of style, and a warm yet rational patriotism. It was the first truly national history which had appeared in the language. It was a noble specimen of a much higher kind of historical art than had hitherto been attempted. It was pervaded by a love of constitutional freedom, of freedom united with order, at once so ardent and enlightened, that Schiller even in the immortal speech which in his 'Wilhelm Tell' he puts into the mouth of Stauffacher at Rütli seems to give only its condensed and poetical expression. Its influence extended through all Germany and far beyond it, was deep as well as wide, and contributed greatly to the progress of history both as science and art.

The 'Twenty-four Books of Universal History' were not published until the year after Schlözer's death ; but he had begun to collect the materials for them as early as 1772, and had delivered the substance of them in lectures at Geneva in 1779, and at Cassel in 1781 and 1782. He often busied himself with them —for the last time not many days before his death. Probably none of the Universal Histories composed since have been drawn more conscientiously from the true sources—the oldest records. Hegel in his 'Philosophy of History' has so spoken of the work as to leave the impression that it abounds in moralisings and external reflections. Nothing can be farther from the truth. There is a very considerable amount of that kind of matter in

Hegel's own work, but almost none in Müller's. What Müller aimed at was truthfully to delineate what had occurred in its essential and permanently interesting features, to omit what was merely local and temporary, but to give to each land and age its due place, to mirror the plan of Providence in the succession of events and the fortunes of men, and to accomplish this by a strictly historical narrative. The idea was on the whole just and good, and was so ably realised, that all Universal Histories since which have gained the approbation of the public have been fashioned in the likeness of that of Müller, and are essentially unlike the Universal Histories of an older date.

CHAPTER III.

LESSING.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing was above all others the leader of the great movement which gave to Germany a national literature and mental freedom. A braver, more devoted, more resolutely active, or more skilful champion it could not have had. He was ever and at all points in its van. He may be said to have lived and died for it, for he sank prematurely to his grave from the sheer exhaustion of vital energies by excessive exertions. He wrought out no philosophical system, and he had no very firm grasp even of philosophical principles, yet few writers have more deserved than he the name of philosopher in the highest sense of the word, for his entire life was a sincere and fervent search after truth. No such life is in vain; and although Lessing elaborated little, he discovered and communicated much, and impressed a powerful and abiding impulse of the noblest kind upon the world.[1]

It is in virtue of the little book on 'The Education of the Human Race' that the name of Lessing belongs to the philosophy of history. I am aware of the reasoning (see Ilgen's Zeitschrift, 1839, pt. 4.) by which it has been attempted to show that Lessing was only its editor, and that its author was the physician Albert Thaers, but I consider it to have been conclusively refuted by Guhrauer and others, and entertain no doubt that this remarkable book was the composition of Lessing alone.

[1] There are two excellent biographies of Lessing—one by Danzel, completed by Guhrauer, and another by Stahr. Erdmann and Zeller give good summaries of his philosophical views. Among essays on Lessing, that by Von Treitschke in his 'Historische und politische Aufsätze,' i.; those by Dilthey and Rössler, in the 19th and 20th vols. of the 'Preussische Jahrbücher;' those by Cherbuliez in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' lxxiii. (1868); and that by Zeller in Von Sybel's 'Historische Zeitschrift,' Jahrg. xii. (1870)—may be specially mentioned.

The style of itself is extremely strong evidence. Lessing has nowhere written better; and those who know the peculiar qualities and singular perfection of his style, will be very slow to believe that Albert Thaers, or any one else, could have equalled him in his own distinctive excellences.

'The Education of the Human Race' neither contains nor indicates a philosophy of history. It is not, as it is commonly described, a philosophical consideration of history from the stand-point of religion. It touches only one side or aspect of history, and only a portion of that. Its real subject is revelation in relation to history; and the thoughts it expresses, and those it gives rise to, have more of religious than of historical significance. The author offers his thoughts, not as the sum and substance of the matter, but simply as suggestions tending towards the discovery of fuller truth through other minds. He is but an inquirer, and aware of the many phases of ignorance, doubt, and error, through which the human mind must pass before it can become capable of receiving pure truth. It is his deep conviction that spiritual apprehension is subject to the law of growth which rules all other knowledge. "All the laws of the universe have had existence from the beginning, yet how recently is it that electricity has been discovered? and do we yet know all which this power implies? Did the earth ever do other than go round the sun? yet how long is it since man found this out? And are the spiritual truths of man's nature more easily discerned than the physical phenomena which surround him? Why should there not be development in these as well as in those?"

The title of the work expresses both its subject and leading idea. The phrase, "education of the human race," is not used as synonymous with "plan of history," but with "revelation." Revelation is the education of the human race. The entire aim of the book is to present revelation in that light, as one which cannot but remove difficulties and yield services in theology. Revelation, the opening paragraphs state, is to the race what education is to the individual,—it gives to the human reason nothing which it might not attain to if left to itself, but gives to it what it is most essential for it to know, quicker and more

easily than it could have found out for itself, just as education gives to man nothing which he might not conceivably educe out of himself, but gives it to him sooner than he would do so,—it must therefore be graduated to the capacities of the race, as education must to those of the individual.

Revelation, it will be perceived, is understood by Lessing as differing from Natural Religion merely in form. Its contents are the same. It is only because reason, left to itself, cannot master its truths rapidly enough, that they must be taught by some one divinely commissioned. I need not say that such is not the orthodox view of revelation, but may be required to remark that it is by no means a very clear or distinct view. It discriminates revelation from natural religion in the abstract which has no form, but not as a positive religion from other positive religions, as they all impose truths in the divine name. Are they all, so far as true, revelations? Lessing considers only two of them—Mosaism and Christianity—to be so; but where in the form separate from the essence can a warrant be found for this? It can only be in the evidences of divine commission in their founders, or, in other words, in miracles and prophecies. But these Lessing regards as quite subordinate accessories, which may or may not have been, and belief in which is unimportant. Hence I cannot but deem his view of revelation more calculated to confuse than to enlighten. He should either have gone farther or not so far. And besides, when he identifies revelation with the education of the human race, and yet confines it to Jews and Christians, he is naturally led in consequence, not to a broad and consistent conception of the education of humanity, but to this somewhat narrow and self-contradictory one, that the race, as a whole, has not been educated—that its Father in heaven has only educated a portion of it, and allowed the rest of it to grow up in ignorance, or left it to educate itself. Have we any warrant for so contracted a notion? any reason for considering revelation more than one of many means, although the greatest and most effective, which God makes use of to educate the minds and form the characters of men? Instead of rising above the traditional creed of Christendom on this point, has Lessing not fallen below

one of the most venerable of Christian beliefs, that of a Justin, a Clement of Alexandria, an Origen, and an Augustine, in the divine guidance and instruction even of the heathen?

Lessing proceeds to say, that even if the first man were furnished with a conception of the one God, he would not long clearly retain it. As soon as reason, left to itself, began to examine and develop that conception, the one immeasurable would be broken up into many measurables, the original vague theism into polytheism and idolatry. To give the race a better direction, God must select an individual people and educate it Himself. He selected the rudest of all to begin with it from the very commencement. To this rude people, who in Egypt were perhaps without any faith or worship, He caused Himself to be announced first, simply as "the God of their fathers," in order to make them familiar with the idea of a God belonging to them too, and to begin with confidence in Him; then, through the miracles by which He led them out of Egypt and planted them in Canaan, testified to them that He was a God mightier than any other God; and gradually demonstrated Himself to be the mightiest of all, the one God. But to this conception of the One, the people, as a whole, were long unable to raise themselves, and so often apostatised, and sought the mightiest god in some god of some other people. A race thus rude, thus entirely in its childhood, could only be taught as a child, only through rewards and punishments addressed to the senses. It knew of no immortality of the soul, yearned after no future life; and to have taught these things to it would have been the same error as that of a schoolmaster who hastens his pupil on without regard to thorough grounding. The Old Testament shows us no such error was committed.

It may be conceived of as 'the First Primer' out of which God taught the Jewish people in a way suited to their state of childhood. It did not contain what they could not have understood or been the better of. At the same time it contained nothing to delay their progress and keep them from the attainment of fuller truth in due time. On this ground Warburton's hypothesis of a miraculous distribution of rewards and punishments under the Mosaic economy is to be rejected, although he

was right in holding that the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and future recompenses were not to be found authoritatively revealed in the Old Testament. It contained, however, preparations, allusions, hints with respect to these truths; and therein consisted its *positive* perfection as a Primer, just as the throwing no difficulties or hindrances in the way to the suppressed truth constituted its *negative* perfection.

While God guided His chosen people through all the degrees of a childlike education, the other nations of the earth had gone on by the light of reason. Most had remained far behind the chosen people, but a few had got before them and educated themselves to an amazing degree. The divinely-educated child and these highly self-educated children were in the fulness of time providentially brought into contact; for the former was sent into foreign countries to have his conceptions enlarged and corrected, to be taught through the medium of the pure Persian doctrine to see in Jehovah not merely the mightiest of national deities but God, to become in some measure acquainted with the doctrine of immortality through the Chaldeans and the Greek philosophers in Egypt, to exercise his reason on revelation, to interpret with a wider intelligence and deeper insight his own Primer. But every Primer is only for a certain age, and to keep a pupil in it after he has outgrown it, is not only useless but hurtful, causing him to look into it for more than there really is, and to handle it in ways hurtful both to the intellect and character. Christ came, therefore, and provided for the child, who had grown up to be a youth, a second Primer, the instructions of the New Testament, the certain and practical knowledge of life and immortality.

The books of this second and better Primer have for seventeen hundred years exercised human reason more than all other books, and enlightened it more, even were it only through the light which the human reason itself threw into them. No other book could have become so generally known among different nations; and the fact that modes of thought so diverse should have been employed on the same volume, has been far more helpful to human reason than if every nation had had a Primer of its own. It was most necessary that each people should for

a time believe this book to be the *ne plus ultra* of knowledge. But it may be as necessary that that time should have an end. The truths which we have been receiving as mysteries of revelation may come to be received as pure truths of reason. The doctrine of the Trinity may raise the mind to see that the unity of God is a transcendental unity inclusive of a kind of plurality,—the doctrine of the *fall*, that man is inherently unable to obey moral laws,—and of the *atonement*, that notwithstanding this inherent inability, God has rather chosen to give him moral laws and to forgive him his sins for the sake of His Son, the self-existent whole of all His own perfections, than not to give them to him and exclude him from the moral blessedness of which they are the essential conditions. A religion whose historical truth perhaps eventually seems doubtful, may lead the mind to a more living and adequate conception of God, its own nature, and relation to God, than it could ever have attained of itself. Thus the Gospel that now is should be thought of not as the absolute and ultimate truth, but as leading to a still better Gospel promised us in the Primer of the New Testament itself. The enthusiasts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries who taught that the new covenant must become as antiquated as the old, and give way to a third age, that of the Eternal Spirit, erred only in being premature and impatient. That is the failing of all enthusiasts—and it is a most natural one; for if what a man sees to be the best does not become the best in his lifetime, what good will it do to him? Will he come back to profit by it? And why not? Why should not the path of the individual to perfection be that of the race? Why should not the orbit of the smaller be included in that of the greater? Why should not every individual exist more than once upon the world? Why should we not be profiting now, although unconsciously, by what we have helped to bring about in a former generation; and why should we not reap in a later generation what we are helping to sow now? Do we take away so much from existing once that there would be nothing to repay the trouble of coming back?[1]

[1] On this the obscurely expressed conjecture, with which Lessing concludes his treatise, see the essay of Rössler in the Preus. Jahrb. for September 1867, and that

Such is a summary of the treatise of Lessing, for the most part in his own words. It will substantiate, perhaps, my statement that it belongs more to religious than historical philosophy, and that it is more owing to its title than to anything else that it is constantly mentioned among works on the latter subject. At the same time, the idea that God acts as the educator of mankind, and in so acting even by revelation does not discard and displace human reason, but elicits and guides it, is certainly one which connects religion and history, and which is of great importance to both. It is a natural deduction from the thought of an omnipotent, omniscient, and gracious God, and a fair religious inference from history; and although it cannot be legitimately made use of as a positive principle of historical explanation, when historical explanations contradict it, there is the strongest presumption against their truth. Therefore, that Lessing should have presented so impressively as he did the idea of a divine education of collective humanity, was undoubtedly of service to the understanding of history as well as of revelation; and one can only regret that his treatment of the idea was not as comprehensive and thorough as it was impressive. It is not a simple or clear idea—it rests mainly on analogies between the species and the individual of a kind very apt to delude; there is much to try faith and baffle reason in accepting and applying it, whether humanity be considered as a succession of generations of which those that precede know nothing of those that will follow, and those that follow very little about those which have preceded, or as a whole in space where the black shadows far exceed the bright spots. Now, Lessing has enunciated the idea, has proclaimed that it is enlightening and consoling, and avowed his own faith in it; but he has not explained or analysed or verified it; has not supplied either its internal elucidation or external vindication. He has even involved it in unnecessary obscurity and inconsistencies by identifying it with revelation, and yet identifying revelation with Mosaism and Christianity. His essay is pervaded by the two mutually contradictory principles: revelation is education which

of Dilthey in the No. for October; also what Leroux says on the subject in his De l'Humanité. The suggestion of Lessing finds its explanation in the theory of Leroux.

has come, and is now coming, to the human race; and the education of revelation is distinct from the education of reason. He should have surrendered either the one position or the other; and there can be no reasonable doubt that the general character of his views made his holding the latter position specially inconsistent. Believing that the two religions which he called revealed were independent either of Scripture or miracle, as he had emphatically maintained in his anti-Goetze war—that they contained only truths of reason, and that reason would have to leave both behind it—he should not have used revelation in the narrower sense at all, but have maintained it to be the source of all religion; or, in other words, have maintained religion to be a continuous revelation. Kuno Fischer and Adolf Stahr[1] erroneously represent him as having done so; they give us what in self-consistency should have been his view, but certainly not what it was. Had he worked out his thought clearly and fully, it must have become identical with that to which a man of genius, the late Signor Mazzini, has given expression in language which might have flowed most appropriately from the pen of Lessing. "Revelation, which is, as Lessing says, the education of the human race, descends continuously from God to man; prophesied by genius, evoked by virtue and sacrifice, and accepted and proclaimed from epoch to epoch, by the great religious evolutions of collective humanity. From epoch to epoch the pages of that eternal Gospel are turned; each fresh page, disclosed by the ever-renovating Spirit of God, indicates a period of the progress marked out for us by the providential plan, and corresponds, historically, to a religion. Each religion sets before mankind a new educational idea as its aim; each is a fragment, enveloped in symbols, of eternal truth. So soon as that idea, comprehended by the intelligence, and incarnated in the hearts of mankind, has become an inalienable part of universal tradition, even as the mountain traveller on reaching one summit beholds another rising above him; so is a new idea or aim presented to the human mind, and a new conception of life, a faith, arise to consecrate that idea, and unite the powers

[1] Kuno Fischer, Geschichte der neuern Philosophie, ii. 558-580. Adolf Stahr, Lessing's Leben und Werke, B. xiv. R. 2.

and activity of mankind in the fulfilment of that aim. Having accomplished its mission, that religion disappears ; leaving behind the portion of truth it contained, the unknown quantity disengaged by it from its symbol, a new immortal star in humanity's heaven. As the discoveries of science have revealed, and will reveal, star upon star, until our knowledge of the celestial system, of which the milky way is zone, and the earth a part, be complete, so the religious faculties of humanity have added, and will add, faith to faith, until the entire truth we are capable of comprehending be complete. Columns of the temple which the generations are building to God, our religions succeed and are linked with one another, sacred and necessary each and all, but having each and all their determinate place and value, according to the position of the temple they sustain. You who seek to support God's temple on a single column seek the impossible. Could mankind follow you in the insane attempt, column and temple would fall together."[1] This doctrine thus expressed must be allowed to have the merits of consistency and completeness ; and the same merits may be claimed for its direct antithesis, the doctrine that the Holy Spirit is educating each individual, each age and nation, day by day out of two books, Nature and Scripture, both inexhaustible, the latter not less so than the former,—that this teacher is never wearied, and his books, although they have lessons suited for the simplest, can never be outgrown even by the wisest,—that although our little systems built on these "have their day and cease to be," the foundations themselves abide sure, unchanged, eternal ; but Lessing's attempt to mediate between these conflicting faiths must be pronounced "a halting between two opinions which neither religion nor philosophy can sanction."[2]

[1] "A Letter to the Members of the Œcumenical Council. By Joseph Mazzini.' Fortnightly Review, June 1, 1870.

[2] On Lessing's religious views see Schwarz, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing als Theolog dargestellt (1854), and the Essay of Zeller already referred to—Lessing als Theolog. Both accounts are able, but in both there is much with which I cannot agree.

CHAPTER IV.

HERDER.[1]

THE little book of Lessing just noticed appeared in 1780. Four years afterwards, Herder published the first volume of his 'Ideas for a Philosophy of the History of Mankind' (Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit), a work which was completed in four volumes in 1787. He had ten years before published a tract entitled 'Another Contribution to the Philosophy of the History of Mankind.' Indeed the subject had presented itself to him in his youth. "In my very early years," he says, "when the meadows of knowledge lay before me in all their morning brightness, so much of which the noonday sun of our life takes away, the thought came often to me whether, since everything in the world has its philosophy and its science, there ought not to be a philosophy and a science of that which concerns us most nearly—the history of mankind in its greatness and entireness. Everything reminded me of this—metaphysics and morals, physics and natural history, religion most of all. The God who has ordained everything in nature according to measure, number, and weight—who according to these has determined the nature of things, their form, their union, their progress, their continuance, so that, from the greatest things to the grain of dust, from the power that holds earth and sun to the thread of a spider's web, only one wisdom,

1 See the 'Lebensbild' by Herder's son (in 6 vols.), and the 'Erinnerungen aus Herder's Leben' (2 vols.) edited by J. G. Müller. Müller's edition of Herder's works is in 40 vols. The English reader will find two interesting papers on Herder by Karl Hillebrand in vol. cxv. of the North American Review. His historical philosophy has been discussed by Quinet (Œuvres complètes, t. ii.), and Laurent (Phil. de l'Hist. 115-132). Adolf Kohut's 'Herder und die Humanitätsbestrebungen der Neuzeit' (1870) merits perusal.

goodness, and power rules—He who also in human bodies, and in the powers of the human soul, has conceived all so wonderfully and divinely that, if we try to reflect on the All-Wise, we lose ourselves in an abyss of His thoughts,—how, said I to myself, can this God have departed from His wisdom and His goodness in the destiny and direction of our race, and here be without a plan? Or can He have meant to conceal from us this plan, seeing that in the lowest creatures, which concern us so little, He has shown us so much of the laws of His eternal scheme?" The thought of his youth remained with him through life, prompted him to the most manifold studies, and ripened into one of the greatest works of which historical science can boast. In that work he concentrated all the energies, and poured forth all the treasures, of a singularly comprehensive, richly endowed, finely disciplined, and genial nature. I can easily perceive various faults in it; the thoughts are often ill-defined, the language often over-exuberant, ultimate principles ignored or feebly grasped, analogies made too much of, the higher stages of civilisation unsatisfactorily treated; and yet I entertain the sincerest admiration for it, as displaying a breadth and truth of general view, a fulness of knowledge, and catholicity of feeling, of the rarest merit. It seems to me to be generally undervalued, because its author had no very eminent capacity for abstract speculation. I admit that he had not; in that respect he was not only far below a Kant or Hegel, but far below a Fichte or Herbert or Krause; yet none the less am I convinced that as regards the philosophy of history, after all that the illustrious chiefs of modern German philosophy have done or caused to be done, there is still need to go back to him, and there may still be found in him some things broader and better than in any of them. None of them had equal width and delicacy of mental susceptibility; in none of them did the relations between nature and man mirror themselves so faithfully on the whole.

It is very difficult to convey even a general notion of a work so comprehensive and rich as his; and, of course, utterly impossible to analyse its 20 books, its 118 chapters, all crowded with thoughts. It is necessary, however, to do what little we can.

He begins by endeavouring to exhibit the relations of man to the entire system of which he is a part; and although he may have been frequently mistaken as to what these were, separately considered, he certainly saw with wonderful clearness how wide and far-reaching as a system they were. He descants on the earth as a star among stars, as one of the middle planets, on the nature of its movements round its own axis and the sun, on its atmosphere, on the distribution of its elements, on the direction of its mountains, and on the revolutions it has undergone; for even these facts have imposed certain limits and exerted certain influences on history. He then describes how minerals are superior to the amorphous substance of the earth out of which they are found; how plants are superior to minerals, animals to plants, one tribe of animals to another; and how what constitutes the superiority of one of these forms of existence to another, is the possession of properties which prefigure something in man, who is thus the centre of the whole terrestrial creation, while at the same time separated and raised above it by the indwelling of a divine principle. He next compares and contrasts the bodily and mental organisation of man with that of the lower animals, and then studies its different faculties in themselves, deducing from his examination that man has been formed for reasoning, for the exercise of art and the use of language, for finer than brutal instincts, for freedom, for spreading over the whole earth, for humanity, for religion, for immortality; while the fact that man never attains here below, otherwise than most imperfectly, the end to which all his meaner wants are subservient, and which they are all contrived to promote, and the general truths that both external nature and the several spheres of human life exhibit a connected and progressive series of forms and powers, and that although no power in nature is without an organ, no organ is itself a power, but only a mean through which immortal power operates—lead him to the conclusion that the earthly life is only a state of preparation, man the connecting link of two worlds, present humanity, but the bud of a future flower. He proceeds to describe the organisation of the varieties of the human race, and to argue that there is but one and the same species of man throughout

the world, this one species having naturalised itself under every climate; that the appetites of the human species vary with constitution and climate, yet a less brutal use of the senses universally leads to humanity; that human fancy is everywhere constitutional and climatic, and yet everywhere led by tradition; that the practical understanding has everywhere grown up under the wants of life, and yet is everywhere a blossom of the genius of a people, a product of its traditions and customs; that the feelings and inclinations of men are everywhere conformable to their organisation and the circumstances in which they live, yet are everywhere swayed by custom and opinion; and that happiness is confined to no spot or climate.

In the last four sentences I have indicated the subjects discussed, and some of the chief theses maintained in Herder's first eight books; but as these constitute, perhaps, the most distinctive and valuable portion of his work, I must add here a few remarks. The great merit of these eight books is, as I have already hinted, their comprehensive and generally truthful exhibition of man's relationship to the rest of nature. No one before him had nearly equalled him in this respect; and the author who has since surpassed him most, Lotze, in his Mikrokosmos, has avowedly imitated him. This merit must not be underrated. Geographical and climatic conditions and man's own organisation are undoubtedly factors which influence most powerfully all history, and which ought to be appreciated by the historical philosopher as completely as possible.

It is none the less especially to those books that whatever truth there is in the criticism of Gans, that "'Herder's Ideas towards a Philosophy of the History of Mankind' contradict their title by not only banishing all metaphysical categories, but moving in an element of positive hatred to metaphysics," will be found to apply. I do not grant that there is the amount or kind of truth in it that Gans supposes; I deem it no fault or injury to have banished from the territory of historical science the sort of metaphysical categories to which Gans would give rights of citizenship and even of sovereignty; but certainly care must be taken that along with such categories no spiritual properties or powers be banished. And Herder, I fear, cannot be said to have exer-

cised sufficient care in this respect. He repudiated materialism, but was far from adopting a decided spiritualism. He did not conceive of spirit otherwise than as an organic power, which is neither indeed identical with organism nor the function of organism; which, on the contrary, fashions and animates organic matter, yet which is originally the same with all the powers of matter, of irritability, of motion, of life, and merely acts in a higher sphere, in a more elaborate and subtle organisation. Out of the deepest recess of being there flows an inscrutable and active element, imperfectly called light, ether, vital warmth, probably the *sensorium* of the Creator; and this stream of celestial fire, poured out into thousands and millions of organs, runs still finer and finer, till it attains in the human frame the highest degree of subtilty of which it is capable in any terrestrial organisation. The soul in the body is thus simply the subtlest of an innumerrable multitude of powers, which it links together and controls, because essentially one with them in nature. With such a conception of spirit, Herder naturally represents it as entirely conditioned by its organism; he even goes so far as to argue in some pages which remind us unpleasantly of Helvetius and La Mettrie, that the *erect posture* of man is the grand characteristic which has determined the differences between his body, brain, mind, and those of the other animals. He supposes a complete coincidence between the spiritual power and the bodily instrument, so that there is nothing in the former which is not expressed in the latter; no innate properties, no latent wealth; that organisation is the full manifestation and measure of spirit. But he does not prove this, nor even try to remove the contradiction which appears to exist between such a supposition and two doctrines which he maintains as of fundamental importance, —viz., that man is free, and that history is a progress. He makes no effort to show how a power essentially identical with those of physical nature, and wholly incorporated in organisation, can be capable of free volition, nor that organic modification keeps pace with social evolution. He seems not to have felt that his conception of spirit made it imperative on him to vindicate his right to believe in liberty and progress. In my opinion his belief in them was as illogical as it was sincere.

His conception of spirit being thus poor and inadequate, he, notwithstanding his admission of liberty and progress, naturally ascribes to the external world and the bodily organisation an influence which is excessive. "He regarded man," as Cousin says, "too much as the child and passive scholar of nature, and has not made enough of his activity." Hence, as all his critics have remarked, his treatment of the lower and simpler stages of human life is immensely superior to his treatment of the higher; and his insight into the earlier forms of the development of speech, poetry, religion, and into the barbarian and oriental worlds generally, much deeper than that of any of his contemporaries; while his comprehension of the character of the classical nations was widely inferior to that of Lessing and Winckelmann.

To proceed. When Herder has shown how man is related to the universe, to the earth, to the particular character and contents of the earth—how the one species of man has been variously organised, and how it is destined to incessant perfecting—he proceeds to insist that men are not isolated individuals, self-dependent, or dependent only on the external world, but that they are connected with and dependent on others through the whole structure of their humanity; that no one can become a man of himself, but only through the co-operation of parents, teachers, friends, countrymen, ancestors, and even of the race as a whole; that no man can escape being laid hold of and moulded by tradition, by an improving or vitiating civilisation; that language is the special means through which individuals and generations act on one another; that by the help of this instrument reason and imitation have been able to invent the various arts and sciences, which have in turn been diffused by its aid as traditions to the remotest places, and transmitted to the most distant ages; that government which consolidates and organises man into his natural state of society, is itself based mainly on a chain of traditions, the first link of which may have been forged by fortune or wisdom, by force or goodness; and that religion, which has introduced the first rudiments of civilisation and science among all peoples, has also been propagated and perpetuated as a sacred tradition.

All this part of his argument, comprising the ninth book, has high value as a statement of the truth of the interdependence, or, as it is often now called, solidarity of men; a truth not only of essential importance in the philosophy of history, but involved in the very conception of its possibility. Herder finds in this truth a warrant for faith in the progressive education of the race. "The history of mankind is a whole—that is, a chain of sociability and tradition, from the first link to the last. There is an education, therefore, of the human species; since every one becomes a man only by means of education, and the whole species lives solely in this chain of individuals." The title of Lessing's book notwithstanding, it was not Lessing but Herder who represented all history as a course of education, the whole earth as a school,—"the school," as he says, "of our family, containing indeed many divisions, classes, and chambers, but still with one plan of instruction, which has been transmitted from our ancestors, with various alterations and additions, to all their race." (IX. 1.)

In the following book he endeavours to prove by various scientific and historical considerations that man originated in Central Asia, and that from thence tradition and civilisation, the rudiments of speech, government, culture, and religion, have spread over the habitable earth; and discusses at length what he calls "the most ancient written tradition of the origin of man," the Mosaic account of the Creation, finding in it a remarkable number of the ideas he had already enunciated. In this book he seems to me to have failed throughout. Neither history nor science have as yet data, revelation apart, to prove where man originated. Ethnology and philology, the two sciences which bear most directly on the question, have only made evident how difficult of solution it is; they have destroyed a vain confidence of knowledge, and taught caution and modesty, but have not attained a certain and definite result; they have shown that such grounds as were in Herder's time received as conclusive are altogether insufficient, and that no conclusion has as yet the warrant of science. The interpretation which Herder gives of the two opening chapters of Genesis is good of its kind; but the kind, of which the late Mr Hugh

Miller's attempt is perhaps the most generally familiar, is radically bad, consisting of a surreptitious substitution of the professed interpreter's own ideas for those of his author.

Herder, in the last ten books of his work, marks the place in history of each nation and age, and this he does often with great truth, always with a noble freedom and breadth of judgment. In one most important respect he decidedly surpassed all his predecessors. He showed a far truer feeling of the rich variety of elements in human life, and of the duty of the historian of humanity to take account of all its aspects. The sympathetic character of his heart, and the synthetic character of his genius, preserved him from anything like narrowness or exclusiveness. And it is just this catholicity, as we may call it, of thought and sentiment, this breadth of conception and affection, which entitles Herder to the high place he must ever hold among those who have sought for a philosophy of history. He has, of course, treated each element and aspect of his subject in a way that seems superficial to the student of the present day who has the advantage of the light diffused by the special researches of eighty intervening years; he has neither adequately traced their separate developments, nor the relations of the separate developments to one another; each element, each epoch is very differently known now from what it was when he wrote; on all particular points—even in regard to art and poetry, which he treated with such wonderfully fine appreciation—Herder is out of date: but yet there is something in Herder which will never be out of date: yea, what is the very essence and life as it were of Herder, his catholicity, his comprehensiveness, can never be outgrown. The philosophy of history must always have incumbent on it as its first duty that of abiding faithful to his universality of spirit and aim.

This universality may, perhaps, have sometimes been overpraised, as if it included all merits, but it is now, probably, in more danger of being regarded as no merit at all; and, indeed, Herder has of late been frequently depreciated on this very ground. It has been said that the whole tendency of his labours was to make the Germans strive to be citizens of the world instead of their own true selves, and that his meditations

on universal history were hurtful because they withdrew attention from the history of the Fatherland, which had been grievously neglected. Now, we admit that his universalism or cosmopolitanism was one-sided, but assuredly the nationalism or patriotism which looks on it as in itself an evil, or denies it to be in itself a good, is as one-sided. Universality ought not to be held any the less good because nationality is also good. These two things are not opposites, but conditions and complements of each other. A German who has not a considerable tincture of universalism in his constitution must be a poor specimen of a German. The Germans claim catholicity of sympathy and the power of assimilating foreign ideas as marked national characteristics, and certainly they are admirable characteristics which every nation should strive to acquire. Herder may not have been national enough, but he was not too universal, catholic, human.

Just on account of its catholicity and comprehensiveness his point of view is that which is proper to the philosophy of history. But, unfortunately, it cannot be said to be as clear as it is comprehensive. "The end of human nature is humanity," is the proposition around which his whole historical philosophy turns. It is only as subordinate thereto that he labours so anxiously to prove that all the arrangements of physical nature have a reference to man; that all earthly life culminates in man; that the powers of each species of creature become more various as the scale of organisation rises until they all unite in the human frame, as the central and most perfect form, the consummation and crown of the entire development of the earth. In his eyes the importance of establishing that the world is a system which centres in man, and organisation a progressive series of forms which terminates in man, lies in the proof these conclusions seem to afford that man, occupying as he does this position simply because organised with more diversity and art, with finer and more varied faculties, than any other being on earth, must have his end in himself. He ought not to seek his end in anything lower than himself, and on earth there is nothing higher. Therefore, reasons Herder, the end of man must simply be to be man, to become what he is capable of becoming,

to mould himself into humanity so far as he can discern it. And the examination both of the individual and of society yields manifold confirmation and evidence still more direct. The human constitution, with all its finer senses and instincts, its reason and liberty, the conditions of its health and happiness, its faculties of language, art, and religion, has been obviously organised with this purpose. The differences of sex, of modes of life, of law and government, the distribution of men over the earth, and the vicissitudes of history, can only be understood if viewed as means to the attainment of the end, that man should everywhere over the whole earth be what he had the will and the power to become.[1]

Humanity is thus, for Herder, the final cause of history, of human nature, and of the earth itself. We naturally expect that he should endeavour to determine what so important a conception means; but in that we are entirely disappointed. He leaves it in all its native vagueness. No difficulties in connection with it seem to have occurred to him; certainly none are removed. "The end of human nature is humanity,"—"man's end is in himself." Are these, what Herder makes them, equivalent propositions? And ought either of them to be identified with the assertion that "man is everywhere what he has the will and the power to become"? Herder has affirmed that the Negro and the Chinaman are all that they have had the will and power to become; that the former could not have been other than gross and violent in his passions, nor the latter, other than the slave of tradition and habit; that thousands of years of discipline could not alter their characters; that nature has made the most she could of beings whom it was necessary so to organise, as that countries like those of Africa and of the north and east of Asia might be peopled. But if so, how has man in these countries had his end in himself, and his destiny in his own hands? Or, how has human nature in these countries had for its end humanity? Are there distinct kinds of humanity for distinct races of men—a Negro humanity, a Chinese humanity, a European humanity, &c.? And in that case may not the word humanity be applied to things as different as the word

[1] B. xv. c. i.

colour when applied both to white and black, or the word moral when applied both to good and evil?

"Man's end is in himself." On Herder's own showing, that is not a view which analogy favours. All other creatures on earth have their ends not in themselves. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to conceive of any creature as having its end in itself. Then, supposing man to have his end in himself, it still remains to be determined whether his end is in the race or the individual, or somehow in both; and that requires an investigation of the severest and most perplexing character, on which Herder has not even entered. No light is thrown on what the solution ought to be by the affirmation that "the end of human nature is humanity." Humanity may mean the attributes which all human beings as such possess, or the culture of these attributes, or a state resulting from their culture, or an ideal to which human nature ought continually to be approximating although it can never reach it. Which of these does it mean in Herder? He does not tell us; nay, he passes from signification to signification, and interweaves and commingles them in the most hopelessly confused and inextricable way. It cannot reasonably be understood in the first sense, when said to be the end of human nature; for in that sense it is really the sum of the conditions of human nature, or the basis and beginning of human nature. What the highest of human beings aims at, cannot be what the lowest of human beings possesses. Taken in the second sense, humanity means self-cultivation. But is self-cultivation not essentially a means to an end? Does it not imply a standard above and a goal beyond itself? If by humanity be meant a state either actually realised or actually realisable, that state ought to be described. If by it be meant an unattainable ideal, its relation to the realised and realisable must stand in great need of elucidation. Now, Herder far from solving these and similar problems, does not even propose them. He leaves, that is to say, utterly vague and unsettled, the conception on which his whole historical philosophy revolves.

And unfortunately the remark must be extended. It is not only the central conception of his historical philosophy which he has left in this state, but all its general conceptions. He is

constantly using such words as nature, fate, liberty, organism, &c., in the same loose, incoherent, and even inconsistent way as he uses the term humanity. In fact, although he had a great and rich intellect, he had not the sort of intellect fitted to deal satisfactorily with general conceptions, to analyse them with closeness and completeness, to separate them clearly and precisely from one another, and to trace with truthfulness their relations both to subordinate and co-ordinate conceptions. He was deficient in the logical qualities required for these exercises of mind.

It must also be acknowledged that he was not successful in his attempt to sum up his system in general theorems. The fifteenth book of his work—that in which he made the attempt—consists of five chapters, each intended to establish or illustrate an important proposition. These five propositions are the following:—

I. The end of human nature is humanity; and that they may realise their end, God has put into the hands of men their own fate.

II. All the destructive powers in nature must not only yield in time to the preservative powers, but must ultimately be subservient to the perfection of the whole.

III. The human race is destined to proceed through various degrees of civilisation, in various revolutions, but its abiding welfare rests solely and essentially on reason and justice.

IV. From the very nature of the human mind, reason and justice must gain more footing among men in the course of time, and promote the extension of humanity.

V. A wise goodness disposes the fate of mankind, and therefore there is no nobler merit, no purer or more abiding happiness, than to co-operate in its designs.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that these five propositions, even if thoroughly established, would be a very inadequate general expression of anything worthy of being called a philo-

sophy of history. And they are far from sufficiently established, either by the speculative considerations, or the historical facts which Herder urges in support of them. The reasonings are feeble, the facts too few; and both reasonings and facts are not unfrequently irrelevant or inconsistent with other reasonings employed, or other uses made by him of the same facts elsewhere.

CHAPTER V.

KANT AND SCHILLER.

THE next writing which has a claim to notice from us is a tractate of Immanuel Kant, the founder of modern German philosophy, published in the same year as the first volume of Herder's 'Ideen,' 1784, and entitled 'Idea of a Universal History from a cosmopolitical point of view' (Idee zu einer allgemeiner Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht). It has been very skilfully translated by Mr Thomas De Quincey, and I shall make my extracts from his translation.

It is prefaced by a short introductory statement, in which Kant insists that human development, like everything else, must proceed according to law, and exemplify a plan. The following sentences from it may be acceptable. "Whatsoever difference there may be in our notions of the *freedom of the will*, metaphysically considered, it is evident that the manifestations of this will—viz., human actions—are as much under the control of universal laws of nature as any other physical phenomena. It is the province of history to narrate these manifestations; and let their causes be ever so secret, we know that history, simply by taking its station at a distance and contemplating the agency of the human will upon a large scale, aims at unfolding to our view a regular stream of tendency in the great succession of events; so that the very same course of incidents, which, taken separately and individually, would have seemed perplexed, incoherent, and lawless, yet viewed in their connection, and as the actions of the human species, and not of independent beings, never fail to discover a steady and continuous though slow development of certain great predispositions in our nature. Thus, for instance, deaths, births, and marriages,

considering how much they are separately dependent on the freedom of the human will, should seem to be subject to no law according to which any calculation could be made beforehand of their amount: and yet the yearly registers of these events in great countries prove that they go on with as much conformity to the laws of nature as the oscillations of the weather: these again are events which in detail are so far irregular that we cannot predict them individually; and yet, taken as a whole series, we find that they never fail to support the growth of plants, the currents of rivers, and other arrangements of nature, in a uniform and uninterrupted course. Individual men, and even nations, are little aware that, whilst they are severally pursuing their own peculiar and often contradictory purposes, they are unconsciously following the guidance of a great natural purpose which is wholly unnoticed by themselves; and are thus promoting and making efforts for a great process which, even if they perceived it, they would little regard."

The essay itself consists of nine propositions, with illustrative and confirmatory observations, so that it is easy both to acquire and convey a clear general view of its contents and purport. Prop. 1 is, That all the natural tendencies of each creature have been so formed as that they will finally reach a complete and appropriate development. For its proof a mere reference is made to the internal and external observation of animals, and to the belief in nature as a system of order in which organs are never found without a use, and in which every arrangement attains its purpose. Kant obviously supposed this proposition far more easily proved than it is; and necessarily, because physiology and natural history had not in his time brought to light those numerous instances of organs at least apparently useless, which now afford so much matter for speculation, and which have modified to a considerable extent the doctrine of final causes in the minds of competently informed men. I question if any cautious biologist would at present undertake to furnish a complete scientific proof of the proposition which seemed to Kant so manifest and undoubted.

Prop. 2 is, In the case of man (as the only rational being on earth), those natural tendencies which have for destination the

use of reason must find their perfect development not in the individual but in the species. The proof of it is rested on the fact that instincts display in an individual all that they are capable of—put forth in each individual all that is in them—whereas reason reaches in the individual only to a very small extent the perfection proper to it. This proposition assumes the previous proposition, inasmuch as it promises reason a complete development on the ground of being one of those natural tendencies all of which must of *a priori* necessity reach a complete development. This falling back on an *a priori* belief I think a weakness and an error. The conviction which most men in the present day entertain that reason will develop itself in the future, is based simply on the knowledge that it has developed itself in the past. That it will ever attain a complete development is a mere speculation, which probably few will grant to be even plausible. On the other hand, the proposition before us to a certain extent, seemingly at least, contradicts that on which it is based, inasmuch as it denies that reason finds its complete development in individual men; while the other affirms all the natural tendencies of each creature to have been destined to a complete development. What is meant by saying that reason will find its perfect development only in the species? Either that it will do so in an abstraction, a general conception, and not in reality, or that it will do so in *some* individuals or generations of individuals to be born, perhaps thousands or millions of years hence, but not in any individuals or generations before them; and either alternative so attenuates the significance of the complete development promised to every natural tendency in Prop. 1, as to leave behind nothing but vacuity. To apply the term "creature" indiscriminately to individual and species is fallacious.

Prop. 3 is, Nature has willed that man should draw from his own internal resources all that transcends the mere mechanic constitution of his animal existence, and should attain no other happiness or perfection than that which, instinct apart, he procures for himself by the right use of his reason. Nature, who does nothing in vain, who is no spendthrift of her means, does no more for man than is good for him. Having endowed him with

reason and will, she exercises towards him a wise parsimony, calculated to force him to exercise them, and to obtain through them the satisfaction of his wants. She casts him on the world as a naked and hungry animal, and leaves him to find out even clothing and food for himself, and puts hindrances and difficulties as well as opportunities and facilities in his way, with the beneficent design of evoking, strengthening, and maturing the distinctive powers in virtue of which he is man, and of causing him to seek and pursue those paths which will guide him on to all heights of achievement.

Prop. 4 is, The means which Nature employs to bring about the development of all the tendencies she has laid in man is the antagonism of these tendencies in the social state,—no farther, however, than to that point at which this antagonism becomes the cause of social arrangements founded in law. The previous proposition informs us what is Nature's general aim as to man, and this what the general means by which she seeks to accomplish it. It is through an antagonism which consists in a certain unsocial sociability (ungesellige Geselligkeit), the result of men having both tendencies to social union and tendencies disruptive of it, both general sympathies and private interests. Were it not for this antagonism, were interests and feelings not to clash, social life would be only like that of Arcadian shepherds, where men would be as gentle as the flocks they tended, and not much more intelligent or energetic. Man wishes peace, but Nature progress, and progress involves antagonism, conflict.

The next proposition is narrower and more definite—viz., The most important problem for the human race, and one to the solution of which Nature irresistibly urges it, is to establish a universal civil society in which political justice shall reign. Society can only be perfectly regulated when a political constitution is found which completely harmonises the liberties of each individual with the liberties of all other individuals. Liberty is not lawlessness—it has its conditions and limits; and it is only when a State is so constituted that these are observed, that human nature develops itself as it ought to do. Men in a well-ordered State are like trees in a well-kept planta-

tion. In a plantation the trees seek to take the light and air from one another, but they thus only force one another to seek the light and air above them—and thus they all grow tall and straight and beautiful; whereas if they had had no restraints on their liberty—if they had stood quite isolated, and grown just as their natures prompted them—they would have been distorted and misshapen.

The proposition which follows is, That the problem of a perfect political constitution is not only, as the previous proposition affirms, the most important which man can propose to himself, but likewise the most difficult,—the one which it takes longest to solve. Man inevitably abuses his freedom in regard to his equals. He is an animal who needs a master. A master, however, can only be found for him among men, among his fellows—*i.e.*, among those who themselves need a master, and in whose hands, whether they be many or few, when mastership is lodged it is sure to be abused. Out of wood so crooked and perverse as that which man is made of, nothing absolutely straight can ever be wrought. Approximation only is possible. And it must take long to reach even a close approximate solution, since even this presupposes just notions of the nature of a good constitution, great experience, and, above all, a will favourably disposed to the adoption of such a constitution; three things that can hardly, and not until after many fruitless trials, be expected to concur.

Prop. 7. The problem of the establishment of a perfect civil constitution implies that of a regular constitution of international relations, and cannot be solved without it. Long after men living within the pale of civil society have cast off barbarism in their relations with one another, it continues to prevail in the relations of State to State. Kant thought it could only be put an end to through the foundation of a great confederation of nations, which should do for separate States what they do for individuals, and in which the safety and rights of each of its members, even the feeblest, should be secured by the collective strength of all. "Visionary," he says, "as this idea may seem, and as such laughed at in the Abbé de Saint Pierre and in Rousseau (possibly because they deemed it too near its accom-

plishment), it is, notwithstanding, the inevitable resource and mode of escape under that pressure of evil which nations reciprocally inflict; and hard as it may be to realise such an idea, States must of necessity be driven at last to the very same resolution to which the savage man of nature was driven with great reluctance—viz., to sacrifice brutal liberty, and to seek peace and security in a civil constitution founded upon law." All wars may be considered as so many attempts on the part of Nature to bring about an arrangement. To doubt of its ultimate accomplishment is, while assuming a final purpose of all natural processes and arrangements in the parts, to suppose there may, notwithstanding, be a want of purpose in the whole.

The eighth proposition sums up all the preceding seven. It is that the history of the human race may be regarded as the accomplishment of a secret plan of Nature to produce a perfect political constitution, both in internal and external relations, as the only condition which can give scope for the complete development of all the faculties with which humanity has been endowed. Philosophy, too, has its millenarianism, for it catches a glimpse of the far-off end towards which Nature moves. The whole course of her movement may be too vast, and the part of it yet traversed too small for us to be able correctly to determine it; and yet both on general grounds, derived from the systematic frame of the universe, and from the scanty stock of observations as yet accumulated, we may have warrant enough to assert that there *is* a course. Various circumstances, and especially the growing dependence of industrial and commercial interests, the dominancy of which is so characteristic of modern society, and ever increasing, on civil liberty within States and peace between them, justify a hope that after many revolutions and reforms Nature will realise her supreme purpose in the establishment of a universal federation of nations, within which all the primordial tendencies of humanity will be able fully to develop themselves.

The essay concludes with this proposition,—A philosophical attempt to compose a universal history according to a plan of Nature, which aims at a perfect civil union of the human species, is to be regarded as possible, and even as capable of

helping toward this very purpose of Nature. I must quote what is said in support of it. "At first sight it is certainly a strange and apparently an extravagant project, to propose a history of man founded on any idea of the course which human affairs would take if adjusted to certain reasonable ends. On such a plan it may be thought that nothing better than a romance could be the result. Yet if we assume that Nature proceeds not without place and final purpose even in the motions of human free-will, this idea may possibly turn out very useful; and although we are too short-sighted to look through the secret mechanism of her arrangements, this idea may yet serve as a clue for connecting into something like systematic unity the mass of human actions that else seem a chaotic and incoherent aggregate. For if we take our beginning from the Grecian history, as the depository, or at least the collateral voucher, for all elder or synchronous history; if we pursue down to our own times its influence upon the formation and malformation of the Roman people as a political body that swallowed up the Grecian state, and the influence of Rome upon the barbarians, by whom Rome itself was destroyed; and if to all this we add, by way of episode, the political history of every other people, so far as it has come to our knowledge through the records of the two enlightened nations above mentioned,—we shall then discover a regular gradation of improvement in civil polity as it has grown up in our quarter of the globe, which quarter is in all probability destined to give laws to all the rest. If, further, we direct an exclusive attention to the civil constitution, with its laws, and the external relations of the State, in so far as both, by means of the good which they contained, served for a period to raise and to dignify other nations, and with them the arts and sciences, yet again by their defects served also to precipitate them into ruin, but so that always some germ of illumination survived, which, being more and more developed by every revolution, prepared continually a still higher step of improvement: in that case, I believe that a clue will be discovered not only for the unravelling of the intricate web of human affairs, and for the guidance of future statesmen in the art of political prophecy (a benefit which has been extracted

from history, even whilst it was regarded as an incoherent result from a lawless freedom of will), but also such a clue as will open a consolatory prospect into futurity, in which at a remote distance we shall discover the human species seated upon an eminence won by infinite toil, where all the germs are unfolded which nature has implanted, and its destination upon this earth accomplished. Such a justification of Nature, or rather of Providence, is no mean motive for choosing this cosmo-political station for the survey of history. For what does it avail to praise and draw forth to view the magnificence and wisdom of the creation in the irrational kingdom of nature, if that part in the great stage of the supreme wisdom, which contains the object of all this mighty display—viz., the history of the human species, is to remain an eternal objection to it, the bare sight of which obliges us to turn away our eyes with displeasure, and (from the despair which it raises of ever discovering in it a perfect and rational purpose) finally leads us to look for such a purpose only in another world?

"My object in this essay would be wholly misinterpreted, if it were supposed that under the idea of a cosmopolitical history, which, to a certain degree, has its course determined *a priori*, I had any wish to discourage the cultivation of empirical history in the ordinary sense: on the contrary, the philosopher must be well versed in history who could execute the plan I have sketched, which is indeed a most extensive survey of history, only taken from a new station. However, the extreme, and, simply considered, praiseworthy circumstantiality with which the history of every nation is written in our times, must naturally suggest a question of some embarrassment. In what way will our remote posterity be able to cope with the enormous accumulation of historical records which a few centuries will bequeath to them? There is no doubt that they will estimate the historical details of times far removed from their own, the original monuments of which will long have perished, simply by the value of that which will then concern themselves—viz., by the good or evil performed by nations and their governments in a cosmopolitical view. To direct the eye upon this point as connected with the ambition of rulers and their servants, in order

to guide them to the only means of bequeathing an honourable record of themselves to distant ages, may furnish some small motive (over and above the great one of justifying Providence) for attempting a philosophical history on the plan I have here explained."

I have given a full account of this tractate, which is deservedly celebrated. It is an ingenious and vigorous attempt, worthy of Kant, to find an *a priori* or metaphysical thread to guide us through the labyrinths of history, and to enable us to see the unity of plan which pervades it. However, it must be remarked, that even had this design been realised, a philosophy of history would have still been to discover. A knowledge of the end or purpose of anything gives a unity to all our other knowledge of that thing, but does not necessitate our knowledge of it being either extensive or thorough. I may know the purpose of a machine without understanding its construction and how it works. And in like manner I might know the purpose of history, while ignorant of how historical events are brought about. But admirable although many of its particular remarks are, and able as is the elaboration of its general conception, the essay under consideration does not succeed as to its main design; it fails to make good its claim to simplify the comprehension of history by the help of *a priori* thought. The appearance of *a priori* deduction which it presents is delusive, and arises from ascribing an absolute and *a priori* character to propositions which have no validity beyond what induction gives them, on the ground of their involving an *a priori* principle—that of final causes. The principle of final causes is not only assumed throughout, but is expressed in such forms as—Nature does nothing in vain—Nature has such and such an end in view—Nature must perfectly realise all her ends,—and made the warrant of other and wider inferences than are contained in the historical facts themselves. Now it is not necessary to deny either the principle of final causes or to deny that it is *a priori* in order to reject as illegitimate such an application of it. If knowledge is to be regarded as *a priori* whenever it involves an *a priori* principle, must not all knowledge—even the simplest act of perception through sense—be *a priori?* That a principle of thought is *a priori* as a condition in the ap-

prehension of facts, is not the slightest reason for concluding that an *a priori use* can be made of it—that is, a use apart from, or at least going beyond, the facts. Every attempt at an *a priori* use of the principle of final causes can only lead to error. It consists in reasoning not from facts to final causes, which is legitimate, but from final causes to facts, which is illegitimate, and which is even a more futile and dangerous process to employ amidst the complications of historical phenomena than in physical science, where, however, it has long been wisely abandoned.

It will have been remarked that Kant distinctly disclaims any wish to discourage or supersede the empirical study of history by carrying *a priori* speculation into the province of history. The far-sighted man must have perceived that there was a danger that *a priori* speculation would not consent to remain merely the servant of what he called empirical history, but might assert independence, in which case the study of history would be much more hindered than helped by it. Could he consistently, however, grant *a priori* speculation so much and refuse it more? Could he warrantably say it should go only so far and no farther, or that it should be a servant to anything? No. If speculation possess power of its own, pure *a priori* power, it has a right to use that power in perfect freedom to the very utmost. Nay, more, it is bound to do so; bound to proceed as far as it can of itself; bound, as Rothe argues in the introduction to his great work on Theological Ethics, to go straight on, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, considering neither whether empirical realities exist nor what they are, following merely the necessity of logic, the inner sequence of the thoughts deducible from the primary datum. If the results at which it thus arrives are found irreconcilable with facts testified to by the senses or established by induction, there must, of course, be supposed to be error either in the speculative or the empirical process, and both must be repeated and revised; but if, after every effort to detect and eliminate error, none can be discovered, and yet no conciliation can be effected, remedy there is none—since to sacrifice the results of either process to those of the other, while at the same time accepting that process as no less legitimate than the other, is a manifestly arbitrary and self-

contradictory act. Either, then, there is no *a priori* use of reason, and Kant has gone too far; or there is, and he has not gone far enough. In the latter case, Fichte only carried out his view to its legitimate issue when he distinctly maintained the monstrous paradox that the philosopher can by pure *a priori* reason—can, apart from all experience—think out the entire plan of the world; can elaborate the philosophy of history without looking at history; can determine all its epochs and the significance of them from the *a priori* idea of universal time.

The particular final cause which Kant assigns to history is the production of a perfect political constitution. Now, a perfect political constitution, a State rightly organised in all its inner and outer relations, would certainly be a very excellent thing; but that it is the great and ultimate end of Providence may reasonably be doubted, and must be most difficult to prove. It implies that a political constitution is the most valuable of all things which history contains, the worthiest of being the final end of Providence, and can only be successfully argued if the entire worth of man is subordinate to, and capable of being summed up in, his citizenship—or, in other words, if the distinctive principle of the modern or Christian world is false, and that of classical paganism true. It is inconsistent with Kant's own view of the State as not an end but a means—as an institution for the realisation of political justice, for harmonising the liberties of each individual with the liberties of all other individuals; so that when Fichte and Hegel represented *rational freedom* as the end of historical development, although they only made explicit what was implicit in Kant, they got rid of a rather obvious inconsistency chargeable against him, that of setting forth an end as *de eodem* both ultimate and proximate.

Rosenkranz maintains, "Kant has taken the right view of the philosophy of history. If we cram into that philosophy all that exists in history, it will inevitably be of an immeasurable extent, and a medley *de omnibus et de quibusdam aliis*. The notion of the State alone supplies a firm foundation, and renders possible organic development. Religion, art, science, can only be included in the philosophy of history, so far as they refer to

political freedom, not as they are in and for themselves." [1] Now, no doubt, it would simplify greatly the problem of historical philosophy if we were free to neglect the consideration of every kind of history but the political, or at least to consider it only in subordination to that; but we are not free to simplify a scientific problem by the exclusion or depreciation of any of its essential elements. If political history be the only kind of history, then, but not otherwise, may the philosophy of history occupy itself solely therewith. With religion, art, and science, indeed, in themselves, it has strictly no concern, but neither has it with the State in itself; it has to do only with their development, or, more properly, with the development of man in these spheres of activity. It is conceivable, of course, that the philosophy of history may succeed in proving that all kinds of human development are subordinate to political freedom: if it can, let it do so; but most certainly it must not assume it. A theorem or result of the science must not be introduced into its definition or notion. I believe, however, no such theorem will be proved. Freedom, political freedom, is "a noble thing," but noble as a means and not an end; only when used so as to attain ends, some of the best of which lie beyond the political sphere altogether, can it be rightly called, as it is by Fichte and Hegel, *rational* freedom. Hence Professor Rosenkranz, instead of here making evident a merit in Kant's essay, has only brought into additional prominence its narrowness, its exclusiveness, or, in other words, its deficiency in the excellences most characteristic of the conception and work of Herder.

The doctrine maintained by Kant in connection with the seventh proposition of his 'Idea of a Universal History,' was advocated by him ten years later in a special tractate, entitled 'Vom ewigen Frieden' (Of Perpetual Peace). It was even in his time no new doctrine. George Podiebrad, ruler of Bohemia, laid before Louis XI. of France, in 1464, a plan "for the emancipation of peoples and kings by the organisation of a new Europe," in which there would be such a coalition of the secondary powers as would be irresistible either by Pope or

[1] Geschichte der Kant'schen Philosophie, 265.

Emperor, and as would prevent both tyranny and aggression. Henry IV. of France and his minister Sully, about the end of the sixteenth century, pondered over the similar but more elaborate design of "a Christian republic" of free nations, preserved from war by a sort of Amphictyonic Council. In 1623, Emeric la Croix published at Paris 'Le Nouveau Cynée, Discours des Occasions et Moyens d'establir une Paix Générale et la Liberté du Commerce par tout le Monde,' in which he argued for the establishment of a permanent international diet, to be intrusted with the power of settling all disputes between nations. Leibnitz maintained in 1670 that this end was to be attained by the nations of Europe forming themselves into a confederation under the sovereignty of the Emperor of Germany. In 1693, the good and great William Penn, in an 'Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe,' also tried to prove that by a diet or confederation Europe could completely free itself of war if it chose. Twenty years later the theory of universal and perpetual peace found in the Abbé de Saint-Pierre one of the most enthusiastic advocates it has ever had. The first of his works in its favour was published in 1712, the last in 1736. Rousseau gave an eloquent exposition of the ingenious Abbé's views in 1761. Goudar in his 'La Paix de l'Europe' (1757) and 'L'Espion Chinois' (1765), and Mayer in his 'Tableau Politique et Littéraire de l'Europe en 1775' (1777) advocated plans of a European congress for the securing and maintaining of peace substantially the same as that of the Abbé de Saint-Pierre.

Kant's work followed these, and is, perhaps, not inferior to anything of the same size which has been published on the same subject. He did not suppose that what he recommended would be speedily adopted. He thought only that even if a dream it was one in which a good man might well indulge; and that there were guarantees in human nature itself, and the essential tendencies of history, that the cause of peace would eventually triumph, and a rational system of international law, preventive of war, be established and respected. He saw clearly that Saint-Pierre's project was faulty, in so far as it assumed that the congress proposed ought to be the creation

of kings, and secure them not only against external wars, but internal revolutions. He considered that nations must be what he called republics—using the word in a sense not to be confounded with democracy, nor inconsistent with monarchy—must be self-governing, and under not the will of one man or any number of men, but of the Law, as the first condition of their entering into concert with others with any rational hope of preventing war. He wished the individual independence of the confederated States to remain intact, so that there should be union without fusion.

Since Kant wrote, many others have written in the same spirit and to the same effect. Saint-Simon and Fourier, and every socialist and communist since, have had plans for the abolition of war. Societies even have been formed in America, in England, and on the Continent, for the establishment of permanent and universal peace, which have maintained journals to advocate their views—Heralds of Peace, Harbingers of Peace, &c.—and which have repeatedly held great international meetings. In 1863 the project of a European diet, of a permanent peace congress, for the settlement of international disputes, was recommended by Napoleon III. to his brother sovereigns. The Franco-Prussian war, so burdened with horrors, and so pregnant to appearance with future mischiefs, gave a new impulse and life to the idea of providing a security against the recurrence of war. It was curious to observe what a number of people within a few months after that war set forth the idea in our public journals as not only a brilliant but a new one. Among its recent advocates, perhaps Professor Seeley, Lord Amberley, and M. de Laveleye have commanded most attention.

The plan of Kant, then, is not likely to be now much laughed at as utopian. Many even of those who see no likelihood of its being realised, will probably regard favourably its advocacy as tending to diffuse a healthy horror of war. For my own part, I cannot say I see much beyond good intentions, either in it or in any kindred scheme. The most thoroughgoing is that which requires nations to cease to be independent States, and to become merely parts of one great empire or federation, a United States of Europe in transition to a United States of the

world. It rests on the argument that if the decisions of any court or other authority are to be effective and final settlements of disputes between peoples, there must be an executive power to enforce them; which necessarily implies that the federation alone has an armed force to obey its will, that there is but one sovereign power, that nations cease to be independent and self-governing. And the argument seems to me conclusive so far as it is negative. While the characters of nations are not essentially different from what they are, nothing less than the absolute absorption of their independence in one comprehensive sovereign will can secure them exemption from war. But, that granted, two strong objections present themselves against our allowing it any further validity, any positive worth. First, although nothing else, a complete spiritual regeneration of human nature excepted, can avail, probably even it would fail. Suppose it so far realised—suppose nations to become unanimously so profoundly convinced of the evils of war, as to sacrifice their independence in favour of a single common power,—how could they guard against the obvious danger of its becoming a tyranny requiring to be overthrown? Is it not likely that leviathan would take to devouring those who had created him? Is it not likely that a universal government would be, as Kant has argued, a very bad government, having far more to do than it could possibly do well, and, in consequence, doing everything ill? It could not be other than very ignorant of the condition and wants of large provinces of its empire; it could have little zeal for the welfare of large sections of its people; it must necessarily be above responsibility. Is it not likely, then,—is it not almost certain,—that the world under its rule would fluctuate between anarchy and despotism; that wars in the form of revolts would be more numerous even than now; and that the world's standing army would require to be larger, and its military budget heavier than ever? Secondly, even peace so obtained would be too dearly bought. What would be given for it would be the life, the independence, the moral dignity of nations, and that is more than even peace is worth. A peace founded on the sacrifice of the nationality of peoples is only the peace of a cemetery.

I see no probability, however, of getting perpetual peace cheaper. International congresses, Amphictyonic leagues, and high courts of nations, might all, I believe, be shown to be more likely to increase wars than to diminish them, to become the instruments of ambition than safeguards against it. The less nations try to realise these plans, the better for the weak and honest among them. The reference of international disputes to arbitrators chosen by the contending parties, is of a different character. It may in many cases be most reasonable and proper—it may often preserve peace when endangered; but most certainly it will never extinguish war, and may occasionally give rise to it instead of preventing it. War has its source in evil lusts, from which no external means or contrivances will deliver us, and which mere worldly prudence will never effectually control. It will cease only when the law of righteousness is fully realised in the conduct of nations, which will only be when the truth has made all individuals free. Not till then will earth see Kant's "republics" and the "perpetual peace" which is to reign among them.

In the year following the publication of his tractate on Universal History, Kant reviewed in the 'Allgemeine Literaturzeitung' the first two parts of Herder's 'Ideen,' in a way which bitterly offended their author, who attempted to retaliate by severe criticism of the Kantian philosophy, but unsuccessfully, as nature had not qualified him to understand, much less to judge, a speculative system so subtle and profound. Kant's review dwelt unduly, I think, on certain obvious defects in Herder's modes of thought and expression, which it would have been sufficient merely to indicate, while it very inadequately appreciated his merits, and contained in itself little or nothing either new or valuable. It was thus unsatisfactory both in relation to Herder and to the subject.

In 1786 he published a short essay entitled 'Conjectural Commencement of the History of Mankind,' in which he endeavoured to explain the Mosaic account of the Fall as the representation in an historical form not of an actual event or individual incident, but of the transition from the innocence of mere sense and instinct to the conscious imperfection of reason and freedom.

Herder had preceded Kant in this direction, both in the 'Ideen' and in a special work. Schiller in 1792, in his 'Hints on the Origin of Human Society as Indicated in the Mosaic Records,' and the youthful Schelling in the same year, in a dissertation for his degree of Master of Arts, 'On the Biblical Philosopheme of the Origin of Evil,' adopted, expanded, and applied the thoughts of Herder and Kant, and contributed to diffuse the notion so current in subsequent German literature and philosophy, that the Fall was a great step in the progress of human culture, and that sin, although a defect in the individual, is a necessity and advantage as regards the race. In my opinion all these attempts proceed on false principles of interpretation, and tend to darken any little light we have on the primeval history of man.

Probably Kant rendered more important service to historical science by the attempt which he made in the 'Kritik of Judgment' to determine what constitutes and differentiates an organism, properly so called, than by anything in the essays—the 'Idea of a Universal History' excepted—brought together by his editors, Rozenkranz and Schubert, in the seventh volume of his works, under the general title of 'Zur Philosophie der Geschichte.' Although Herder had often spoken of history as an organic development, he had done nothing to define and explain what organic development meant, and obviously had merely a vague notion thereof, which he might as well have expressed by natural process, or some similar phrase. Kant, on the other hand, did not apply the notion of organism to history, but he endeavoured to ascertain precisely what it denoted—to distinguish it from mere external adaptation—to analyse it into its conditioning and constituent thoughts. He may not have entirely succeeded, his analysis may not have been exhaustive or even quite satisfactory so far as it went; but to deal with the subject at all was a great gain; and to deal with it in so vigorous and suggestive a manner as he undoubtedly did, was a still greater gain.

But, of course, by far the greatest of Kant's services to the science of history, as to every other special science, was the marvellous impulse which he gave to the scientific spirit by his

investigations into the nature, conditions, and limits of knowledge itself. These investigations—the most profound and the most comprehensive ever made—broke the dogmatic slumber of Europe, dispelled a host of cherished dreams, and allowed a flood of light to pour in through new openings. What he did in these ways I must not here attempt to indicate, and still less to estimate; but silence certainly does not imply belief that it was little, or indeed other than indescribably great.

Among the earlier followers of Kant there is only one whom it is necessary to mention in the present history—the poet Schiller.[1] In 1787 he read the more important of those essays of Kant of which I have just given an account, and accepted with full assent the idea that history to be treated philosophically must be studied and presented teleologically, or as a system of means and ends. It was about this very time that he began collecting materials for his historical works; and the teleological principle advocated by Kant is the most general philosophical idea traceable in the 'History of the Revolt in the Netherlands,' and the 'History of the Thirty Years' War.' It must be allowed, however, that there is not much of philosophy in either, any more than of research, although there are other things which have not undeservedly given them popularity.

The clearest proof of the influence of Kant's historical speculations on Schiller is to be found in the Inaugural Discourse delivered by the latter in 1789 as Professor of History at Jena. That lecture, entitled 'What is Universal History, and with what views should it be studied?' is certainly a most eloquent one—every way worthy of Schiller; but to say, as Lord Lytton has done, that "the notions it contains on history are worth whole libraries of history itself," or, as Mr Carlyle, that "there perhaps has never been in Europe another course of history sketched out on principles so magnificent and philosophical," is eulogy utterly

[1] Of course all the biographers of Schiller treat to some extent of his philosophical abilities and writings. Kuno Fischer has three excellent lectures on 'Schiller as a Philosopher;' Drobisch has treated specially of his relation to the Kantian ethics; and Schasler, in his recent 'Critical History of Æsthetics,' has given an able account of his æsthetical speculations.

dissevered from truth—eulogy of a kind which no man needs less than Schiller.

The order of thought in the discourse is as follows: First, a contrast is eloquently drawn between study which has no higher aim than to amass the knowledge required for worldly maintenance, wealth, and preferment, and the study which springs from a philosophical spirit, from the love of truth, and of intellectual and moral perfection; and it is inferred that the latter kind of study is alone desirable and appropriate in regard to universal history. Next two pictures are presented to us—one of what man is in the savage state, and another of what he is at the present time in civilised Europe; and universal history is described as the study which shows how men have passed from the former to the latter of these states, what their fortunes have been in each age, why nations differ so much from one another, and why society has the creeds, laws, manners, classes, &c., which it has. We are then told that there are great blanks in the historical world—that not only many events but many ages are irrecoverably forgotten—so that universal history will never be other than an aggregate of fragments unworthy of the name of a science. The universal historian must, moreover, make a selection even among the facts which have been recorded; and the principle of selection, Schiller argues, must be the perception of an essential, incontestable, and evident relationship between these facts and the present constitution of society, the welfare or misery of the generations now living. Universal history itself has flowed down through time; but the universal historian must trace the course of the stream by proceeding upwards. Having adopted this thought of Kant, Schiller then adopts another, and declares that the philosophical spirit soon discovers, in the course of its study of history, that the past is connected with the present not merely as cause with effect, but as means with purpose. He, finally, insists that the teleological principle is what alone can make of history a rational whole for the mind of man, and a morally elevating object of study.

These are, I believe, the only thoughts which will be found in Schiller's lecture when it is reduced to its essential constituents, to what Lytton calls its "notions," and Carlyle its "principles."

The process of reduction, of course, strips it of all its eloquence and deprives it of all its life; but it leaves behind all its fundamental ideas, and these are just those which have been indicated. Obviously, even had they all been original, a mere statement of them, however eloquent, would have been an insufficient ground for our assigning him a distinguished place among the cultivators of historical philosophy. And there is not one of them in the slightest degree original. Such being the case, it would be as reasonable to represent him as a great historical philosopher because of the delineations of the progress of society, and of the epochs of history in his beautiful poems of "The Walk," and "The Four Ages of the World," as because of the brief and general observations contained in the Discourse on Universal History.

The department of philosophy in which Schiller really distinguished himself was Æsthetics; in the history of that science his services must always be recorded with honour; and these services, I would add, tended to the benefit of the science of history, inasmuch as they contributed to determine the function of art in human nature and human history, in the life of the individual and the life of the race. The noble poem of "The Artists" celebrates the influence of that feeling after Beauty which is distinctive of man,—its conciliation of sense and reason —its elevation of the savage into a cultured being,—its

> "Charming the breast it tutors to aspire,
> From the rude passion and the low desire"—

its "luring of the indolent through sweet play to lofty duties,"— its eliciting and diffusing the joys of sympathy and its refining and spiritualising of love,—its giving form and force to the powers of the world to come, and investing the Invisible with attributes which secure reverence and affection;—in a word, it delineates, with exquisite truth and skill, art as the assistant and associate of morality, religion, and philosophy, necessary to their existence, and still more necessary to their development and perfection. And all that Schiller there sings he philosophically establishes and justifies in his various essays on æsthetic subjects, and especially on the 'Letters on Æsthetic Education.'

In that work he effected important modifications in the theory of Kant, although chiefly by the development of Kantian principles. These modifications all tended to show that art was the principle and form of life which bridged over the chasm between sense and intellect—between the reign of mere force and the reign of law—and gave to man the freedom only to be found in the co-operation and harmonious action or play of his twofold nature. They all tended, in other words, to correct an error into which Kant had practically fallen,—the error of regarding political history as the whole of history. If the Æsthetic Letters have not wholly failed in what they sought to accomplish—and he must be a rash man who undertakes to maintain that they have—art cannot but be admitted to have such a place in the human soul and in the education of human life that its history must be an essential department of general history.

The last four of these Letters illustrate the following thesis enunciated at the commencement of Letter XXIV.: "There may be distinguished three different moments or stages of development, through which both the individual man and the whole race must pass in a necessary and prescribed order, if they would complete the entire circle of their destiny. Through accidental causes, indeed, which lie either in the influence of external things or in the free choice of man, the single periods may be at one time protracted, and at another abbreviated, but none can be entirely overleaped, and even the order of their succession can be neither inverted by nature or will. Man is wholly subject to the force of nature in the *physical* condition; he frees himself from this force in the *æsthetical* condition; and rules it in the *moral* condition." I have already in the course of the present work had several times to reject laws or generalisations of this kind, and have no hesitation in now rejecting Schiller's, so far as it pretends to determine the succession of the epochs of history. He has produced no proof of there being three separate and distinct epochs—a physical, æsthetical, and moral—which follow one another in the order he mentions; nay, his observations all directly tend to prove, or at least to illustrate the contrary—viz., that the physical, æsthetical, and moral, being essential elements in

human nature, are also essential developments of human history, and, in consequence, so intimately related as to be through all epochs of time inseparable.

I regret that I do not feel at liberty to make more than a single quotation in illustration of the character of his observations. It is from the last Letter: "Although need forces man into society, and reason plants social principles within him, yet beauty alone can impart to him a *social character*. Taste alone introduces harmony into society, since it establishes harmony in the individual. All other forms of conception dismember man, since they are founded exclusively either on the sensuous or on the spiritual part of his being; only that of beauty makes of him a whole, since both his natures must thereto unite and agree. All other forms of communication dismember society, since they relate exclusively either to the private susceptibility or to the private dexterity of its individual members, and consequently to what is distinctive between man and man; only the communication of beauty unites society, since it relates to what is common to all. We enjoy the pleasures of sense merely as individuals, without the generic nature which dwells in us participating therein; consequently we cannot extend our sensuous pleasures to universality, since we cannot make our individuality universal. We enjoy the pleasures of knowledge merely generically, and while we carefully remove from our judgment every trace of the individual; consequently we cannot make our rational pleasures universal, since we cannot exclude the traces of individuality from the judgment of others, as from our own. Beauty alone we enjoy both as individuals and as genus; that is, as representatives of the genus. Sensuous good can only make one person happy, since it is founded upon appropriation, which always carries with it exclusion; and even this one it can only make partially happy, because the personality does not participate in it. Absolute good can only make happy under conditions, which cannot be universally presupposed; because truth is only the reward of sacrifice, and only a pure heart believes in the pure will. Beauty alone blesses all the world, and every being forgets its limitations while under her spell."

CHAPTER VI.

FICHTE.

AFTER Kant, Fichte; after one noble man another still nobler; but also after one erroneous mode of treating history another far more erroneous. Fichte's views on the subject of historical philosophy are contained in his 'Characteristics of the Present Age' (Grundzüge des gegenwärtigen Zeitalters), published in 1806, but consisting of lectures delivered in Berlin during the winter of 1804-5. This book, like all the writings of Fichte, is instinct with the noblest and divinest life; like all his popular writings, is composed in the most beautiful style; and both spirit and style have been preserved with singular fidelity and felicity by William Smith, LL.D., its translator into English.[1]

There lies, however, at the root of the whole theory which Fichte here sets forth, an error of the most fatal kind—the separation of philosophy from experience, of the philosophy of history from history itself. Whether such a dualism could be logically justified in a system which claimed to be strictly unitarian, and if so how, are questions which I must not discuss; the fact of the dualism alone concerns us. Its source, doubtless, was Kant's distinction between sensibility and understanding, and it may be regarded as the *reductio ad absurdum* of that distinction. According to Fichte there is a philosophy of history, but it is not to be found in history itself, nor is the way to it through history. "The philosopher," he says, in his first lecture, "must deduce from the unity of his presupposed principle all the pos-

1 Dr Smith is also the author of an excellent Memoir of Fichte, and has translated his Vocation of the Scholar, the Nature of the Scholar, the Vocation of Man, the Way towards the Blessed Life, and the Outlines of the Doctrine of Knowledge. The Complete Works of Fichte are in 8 vols. (Berlin, 1845-6), edited by his son, J. H. Fichte, who has likewise written his father's life and published his correspondence.

sible phenomena of experience; but it is obvious that in the fulfilment of this purpose he does not require the aid of experience—that he proceeds merely as a philosopher, paying no respect whatever to experience, but absolutely *a priori* describes Time as a whole, and all its possible epochs." And again, in the ninth lecture: "The philosopher who, in his capacity of philosopher, meddles with history, follows the *a priori* course of the world-plan, which is clear to him without the aid of history at all; and the use which he makes of history is not to prove anything by it, for his principles are already proved independently of history, but only to illustrate and make good in the actual world of history that which is already understood without its aid."

Now this is at least very explicit and clear. There can be no doubt as to what it means, and no doubt that its meaning is thoroughly false. The philosopher has no such marvellous privilege accorded him as to be able thus to know, through merely ideal speculation, the course of events. An *a priori* description of any epoch of time is impossible. The true philosopher of history is he who studies it more deeply than other men, not he who does not study it at all, but who deduces it from the unity of a presupposed principle. In fact, the assertion that all the possible phenomena of experience are capable of being deduced by philosophy without the aid of experience is so extravagant that defence of it is impossible, and we may anticipate that whoever makes it will not seriously maintain it. Certainly Fichte does not, but explains it entirely away. We find to our astonishment that *the possibility of deducing from a philosophical principle* all experience means really *the impossibility of deducing any;* that the world-plan is all that can be deduced; and that the world-plan is not only not a fact of experience, but that experience may not correspond to it—that experience is *a posteriori,* and refuses to be deduced. "The history of the gradual culture of the human race," we read in Lecture 9, "is made up of two intimately connected elements—one *a priori,* and the other *a posteriori.* The *a priori* is the world-plan, the general features of which have been set forth, conducting humanity through five epochs. Without historical information at all, the thinker may know that these five epochs must succeed each other, and may also be able to characterise generally such of them as have not yet taken their

place in history as facts. Now this development of the human race does not take place at once, as the philosopher pictures it to himself in thought, but, being disturbed by foreign powers, it takes place gradually at different times, in different places, and under particular circumstances. These conditions do not by any means arise from the idea of the world-plan, but are absolutely unknown to philosophy; and here begins the pure empiricism of history—its *a posteriori* element—history in its own proper form." I do not think this consistent either with the general philosophy of Fichte or with a host of other statements in this book, and believe him to have been logically bound to show that there were no foreign powers which could disturb the rational development of the human race, no *a posteriori* elements, no real distortion of events even in time, and that any appearances there might be of such were due merely to imperfections in philosophy which it must eventually free itself from; but, consistency or inconsistency, the concession to experience will probably be regarded as an act of homage to common-sense and the truth of things. It calls to mind an amusing passage in our author's 'Leben und literarischer Briefwechsel' (Th. ii. 433-435). Fichte informs F. A. Wolff he had arrived by *a priori* deduction at the same results, regarding the Homeric Epos, as the other through empirical criticism. The illustrious scholar shrewdly replies that there were certain peoples whose names were unfortunately all that the ancients had favoured us with, and that he would be very glad to learn *their* histories from one who, like Fichte, could get at them *a priori*. Fichte excuses himself; he is a philosopher, not a philologist, and will only estimate the value of what has been historically discovered. ("Ich bin nicht Philolog von Profession; als Philosoph bin ich bekannt. Als Philosoph nur dürfte ich die historische Entdeckung würdigen.")

The general assertions about deducing experience somehow turn out then to have meant nothing when they require to be made good. Let us see how it stands with the world-plan. That rests, according to Fichte, on the idea of time as a whole. "Every particular epoch of time is the fundamental idea (Grundbegriff) of a particular age. These epochs and fundamental ideas of particular ages, however, can only be thoroughly understood by and

through each other, and by means of their relation to universal time. Hence it is clear that the philosopher, in order to be able rightly to characterise any individual age, and, if he will, his own, must first have understood *a priori*, and thoroughly penetrated into the signification of universal time, and all its possible epochs." Here, at the outset, our difficulties begin. Why should time have epochs? It seems absurd to say that time, merely as time, has epochs. Epochs are stages of the development of beings in time. To talk of penetrating into the signification of universal time means nothing, or it means attaining to an understanding of the nature and purposes of the existences conditioned by time, which is not likely to be reached by an *a priori* route. Let us suppose, however, that time has a signification of its own, or apart from things in time—that we can penetrate *a priori* to this signification, and not only prove in consequence time to have epochs, but seize the fundamental ideas of these epochs, (which is certainly liberality enough in the concession of suppositions),—and there still remains that the philosopher should connect deductively earthly with eternal time—the plan of the world with the plan of the universe. Fichte assures us it can be strictly done, but declines the task of doing it, on the ground that the demonstration is unsuited to a general audience, which one can very readily believe. The result, however, is, that again our hopes of *a priori* deduction are disappointed. It may charitably be supposed that the deduction is, as some say it is, in the *Wissenschaftslehre;* but I wish the reader joy who looks for it there, and envy his happiness if he find it.

Fichte merely states dogmatically, without deduction, what the fundamental idea of earthly time is. He does so in this golden sentence: "The end of the life of mankind on earth is this—that in this life they may order all their relations with freedom according to reason." A noble and true thought, worthy of the noble and true man who expressed it! Had he a right, however, as a philosopher, to express it here? It is impossible to overlook that, under the plea of declining to undertake a deduction of earthly from eternal *time*, Fichte has excused himself from deducing earthly from eternal, human from divine *life;* that he has silently identified time and life—a most unwarranted procedure, but a convenient one: because, while time of itself will

not divide into epochs, life in time will, especially if we are free to choose, as Fichte does, that notion of life which pleases us, without giving any reason. "The end of the life of mankind on earth is this—that in this life they may order all their relations with freedom according to reason." Why should induction not be able to establish *that?* or rather, how should anything else be able to establish it? How prove what the end of human life on earth is except through examination of the actions which show what the tendencies of that life are? The belief that man's life on earth tends to rational freedom is not a presupposition of historical science, but one of its inductions. It is warranted only so far as history, understood as inclusive of all that manifests the character of individuals and societies, confirms it.

Although Fichte does not deduce human life on earth from the one eternal life, he earnestly insists that the one is the necessary development of the other—that all existence in time has its root in a higher existence above time—that, strictly speaking, there is but one life, one animating power, one living reason—and that the greatest of errors, and the true ground of all other error, is the delusion of the individual that he can exist, live, think, and act of himself. The first of thought and being, the starting-point and substance, at once the subject and object of speculation, was not for him in 1804 the *ego* of the *Wissenschaftslehre;* but the one, true, and absolutely self-existent Being—the God whom all hearts seek. And that each individual moment of man's life on earth is contained within the development of the one original divine life; that whatever meets the view, and seems beyond that one life, is not beyond it but within it; that to see things truly, means to see them only in and through the one original life; that the light and life of religion, light and life in God, is the only true light and life, the only science and the only virtue,—is the central, inspiring, everywhere-present conviction of the book before us—so that open it where we will, we find ourselves in the pure, ennobling, holy atmosphere, congenial to a pious and heroic soul like that of Fichte.

The world-plan embraces, according to Fichte, five epochs: the primitive age or state of innocence of the human race, in which reason rules as mere law of nature or blind instinct; the

age of authority, or state of progressive sin, in which reason rules only through external institutions, and creeds which do not seek to convince but demand a blind assent and obedience ; the age of indifference to truth, or state of completed sinfulness, in which reason is rejected, both as instinct and authority, without being accepted in any higher form; the age of science, in which reason and its laws are understood with clear consciousness, and truth is revered and loved before all other things ; and, finally, the age of art, in which humanity beautifies itself in all its relations through the exercise of the perfect freedom which it has realised for itself into a fitting image and representative of reason. The two first of these ages agree in that both are epochs of *blind or unconscious reason*, the first as *instinct*, and the second as *authority*. The two last agree in that both are epochs of *seeing or conscious reason*, the one as *science*, and the other as *art*. The third age is transitional, and we are living about the close of it, in the middle of universal time, with a world of darkness and constraint behind, with a world of light and freedom before, but belonging properly to neither.

Fichte pronounces illegitimate all questions as to the origin of the world, the origin of the human race, the origin of civilisation and of language, and even as to how the different regions of the earth were originally peopled, and considers all attempts to answer them mere trouble and labour lost. That he could seriously give utterance to such an opinion showed conclusively that one-sided speculation had, in a considerable measure, destroyed his very sympathies with positive scientific research ; but irrational as the assertion, even in his time, was, it did not of course display the same measure of ignorance and dogmatism combined as it would do now. And similar assertions may be heard even now.

Fichte knew, however—of course as a philosopher — what took place on the earth before the origin of history. He knew that from the first absolute reasonableness had somewhere existed among men ; that the human race was, in its primitive form, purely reasonable, without effort or freedom ; that before history, science, or art, a normal people lived in a state of perfectly developed although unconscious reason. This dogma, already pro-

pounded the year before by Schelling, was obviously derived chiefly from an arbitrary interpretation of the earlier chapters of Genesis as a myth, and an assumption that myths were essentially philosophemes; but it was also affirmed to be a conclusion of *a priori* philosophy. Our author actually imagined he sufficiently proved it by saying, "Out of nothing nothing comes, and therefore irrationality can never become reason;" actually imagined he could dispel the arguments of those who would extend the development theory to man and his history by simply pronouncing over them *ex nihilo nihil fit.* The Fichtean hypothesis of a primitive normal people has in itself nothing inherently absurd, and has as good a claim to be candidly considered as any other hypothesis on the same subject; but the Fichtean philosophy makes but a poor appearance in trying to establish it.

Scattered around the normal people, Fichte supposes that there lived timid and rude earth-born savages ("scheue und rohe erdgeborene Wilde"), with no culture beyond what was necessary for the maintenance of their sensuous existence. Neither the normal people nor these earth-born savages had a history, or are known to history, for that takes cognisance only of what is new and unexpected, only of what contrasts with what preceded it, of which there was nothing either in the life of the normal people, guided equally and unconsciously as they were by their rational and moral instinct, or in that of the earth-born savages, who were exclusively impelled by their senses and appetites. The very existence of history, therefore, implies that something must have occurred to drive the normal people away from their native homes, and scatter them over the seats of barbarism; and this supposition, according to Fichte, can be proved in the strict domain of philosophy. It certainly occupies an important place in his philosophy of history. The transition from the first to the second great epoch of time—from that of reason which rules as instinct to that of reason which rules as authority—the rise of science and art, and the establishment of the earliest states or governments, are all referred to the contact and conflict of the two original races, and to the superiority of the rational people over the barbarians. His profound reverence for true culture made him regard the possession or the want of it the broadest

distinction which could separate man from man, and so this distinction seemed to him not only to go back through all history to the very beginning, but to be the axis, if we may so speak, on which all history turned. It was to him what the distinction of Cainites and Sethites, or of children of God and children of the world, has been to so many others.

The lectures on the idea and historical development of the State, and on the influence of Christianity upon the State, are pervaded by this wholly unverified hypothesis that history has been throughout the result of the contact and interaction of two original tribes of men—a normal and a savage people. They contain, however, various suggestive and even true views. The lectures on the third age — the present age — delineate its scientific, literary, moral, political, and religious condition, with singular clearness and power, and, I believe, with singular truthfulness. They are, it must be admitted, anything rather than the expositions of *a priori* science; but they are among the noblest of lay sermons. In them a man entitled to do so by his rare personal worth holds up to the light of reason the actual life of his age, so as unsparingly to expose its self-deceits, its shortcomings, and sins. With righteous indignation, with withering sarcasm, he attacks the shallowness and one-sidedness of its science, the pandering of its literature to the indolence and prejudices of the public, its substitution of letter and dogma for resignation and devotion to the will of God, its vain efforts to penetrate into the spiritual world by mystical means, its sensuous egotism. Naturally, he sometimes goes too far. In one respect he seems to me to go lamentably too far; for he condemns both Catholicism and Protestantism as unchristian, condemns even the Pauline doctrine on which he holds them to be based, and maintains that the Apostle John alone has taught us truly what was the mind of Jesus.

Fichte wrote his characteristics in a spirit of very enthusiastic cosmopolitanism, which finds its most decided expression in the well-known words at the close of the 14th lecture: "Where, I ask, is the fatherland of the truly cultivated Christian European? In general it is Europe,—in particular, it is that State in Europe which occupies the highest rank of culture. The State which

commits a fatal error must indeed fall in course of time, and therefore cease to hold this rank. But although it falls, and must fall—nay, on this very account—others arise, and among these one especially which now occupies the rank which the other held before. Let, then, mere earth-born men, who recognise their fatherland in the soil, the rivers, and the mountains, remain citizens of the fallen State,—they retain what they desire, and what constitutes their happiness;—the sun-like spirit, irresistibly attracted, will wing its way wherever there is light and liberty. And in this cosmopolitan frame of mind we may look with perfect serenity on the actions and the fate of nations, for ourselves and our successors, even to the end of time." These words had only been printed nine months when the catastrophe of Jena occurred, when the military power of Germany was broken, and its last defence, the Prussia of Frederick the Great, lay smitten to the dust. Logically, Fichte should have gone over to the side of France; but, of course, in defiance of logic, he left such baseness to the earth-born, and stood forth with such power as he (one man) had, and with such weapons as he (no soldier but a thinker) had, to do battle for the Fatherland against its oppressor. The disgrace and misery of his country made him feel how dear it was to him, how precious national honour was, how significant a fact in history nationality was. And this new experience found expression in the breathing thoughts and burning words of the 'Reden an die deutsche Nation.'

These 'Discourses to the German Nation,' pronounced in 1807 in Berlin, when that city was in the hands of the French, so that the drums of the enemy at times drowned the voice of the orator, both contrast with and supplement the 'Characteristics of the Present Age.' In the latter work, Fichte supposes humanity to have reached only the middle of the third epoch; in the former, he supposes it to have made, in the three intervening years, an unexampled stride forwards, so that the third epoch is already completed, and the fourth commenced. Subjectivity, wilfulness, egoism, sin, are regarded as having developed themselves to the full, and as having thereby shown their own nothingness, and

necessitated the flow of history into a new channel. The standpoint of the 'Discourses' of 1807 is that of transition to the epoch of reason as science, the age in which truth is to be esteemed and loved above all things else. But it is maintained that there is one nation on which the progress of true culture and science is entirely dependent. Its fall would be the ruin of all the interests and hopes of humanity. That nation is Germany. The German people, according to Fichte, has alone been preserved pure or unmixed, has alone an original genius, has alone within it the hidden and inexhaustible springs of spiritual life and power. The French and other Romanic peoples, having bloomed and ripened prematurely owing to the over-stimulus consequent on the commingling of their constituent races, are now exhausted and effete. In fact, the antithesis of German and French, of Urvolk and Mischvolk, holds a similar place in the Reden to that of the normal and earth-born people in the Grundzüge, and a use is made of it very flattering to the Germans, and very unfair to the French. At the same time, his patriotism did not prevent his seeing the faults of his countrymen; on the contrary, he thought them even more hopelessly corrupt than events proved them to be. He looked for good only from their children, if subjected to a rational education.

The epoch of reason as science must gradually pass into that of reason as art, the fifth and final stage of the life of humanity on earth; for man cannot study and love the truth as what is highest and best without having his character moulded by it into a fitting image of Absolute Reason. He gradually learns to order all his relations and actions according to the truth, which he has succeeded in scientifically comprehending. He thus only comes back to the state of perfect reason from which he started, and, so far, may be considered to have gained nothing. He has only regained the paradise he lost. Has he not had the toil of his long journey for nothing? No; for he has thereby learned to know the value of what he lost, and learned both to know and freely to live according to his own true nature. This final age was described by Fichte in the lectures 'Ueber die Staatslehre,' which

he delivered at Berlin in 1813, but which were only published posthumously in 1820. The pervading tone of thought in these lectures, as in all his later productions, is that of theosophic mysticism, and so the epoch of art is pictured as the realisation of the Christianity taught by the Apostle John—the kingdom of God on earth, the reign of the spirit of love, which, all-sufficing, needs no external laws.

CHAPTER VII.

SCHELLING.[1]

A NUMBER of the notions contained in Fichte's 'Characteristics of the Present Age' had shortly before its publication been cast into circulation by an author who began his philosophical career as the avowed disciple of Fichte, the brilliant Joseph Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling. That imagination had too much influence over this remarkable man—that he wanted logical persistency—constructed a series of systems instead of elaborating one—dazzled often instead of enlightening—and attempted far more than he was capable of performing,—are facts which must not prevent our admitting that his nature was most richly endowed, and that he contributed many valuable ideas

[1] The general philosophy of Schelling will be found well described in the histories of philosophy by Willm, Schwegler, Chalybäus, Erdmann, Zeller, &c. Rosenkranz published in 1843 a volume of lectures on Schelling. The work of Noack—'Schelling und die Philosophie der Romantik' (1859)—is not written in an amiable spirit, but its perusal can scarcely be dispensed with. It is to the study of Schelling what Haym's book is to that of Hegel. Frederick Schelling, the son of the philosopher and editor of his collected works, was engaged on a biography of his father when he died in 1863. The fragment of about 200 pages which he had prepared, has been included in the three volumes, 'Aus Schelling's Leben. In Briefen' (1869-70), edited by Professor Plitt of Erlangen. The two volumes of letters published by Waitz in 1871, under the title 'Caroline,' is a very interesting contribution to our knowledge of the most important decade of Schelling's life. These sources have been utilised with characteristic skill by Kuno Fischer in the volume of his 'Geschichte der Neuern Philosophie' (vi. 1) devoted to 'Schelling's Leben und Schriften,' and published in 1872. His book on 'Schelling's Lehre' has not yet appeared. There is an excellent paper on 'Schelling's Life and Letters,' by an able and very careful student of his writings, Mr J. S. Henderson, in the 'Fortnightly Review,' Nov. 1, 1870. The complete edition of his works is in 14 vols., which are distributed into two divisions, the first containing ten and the second four volumes. All the works referred to in this chapter are contained in the first division.

to almost every department of philosophy. He had a mind susceptible to every kind of influence, and hence oriental and classical literature, the theological rationalism of the eighteenth century, the political and social principles of the French Revolution, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Lessing, Herder, Kant, and Fichte, the new forms of poetry, and the new discoveries of science, had all strongly and permanently affected his character while still a mere youth. He gave expression to general views on history at all stages of his philosophical career, without, however, publishing any work exclusively devoted to the subject. Leaving out of account at present his so-called positive philosophy, which will fall to be spoken of at a later period, a very brief indication of his earlier historical reflections must suffice.

There is among the articles which Schelling published in the 'Philosophical Journal' in 1797 and 1798, under the title of 'General Survey of the latest Philosophical Literature,' the fragment of a discussion of the question, Is a philosophy of history possible?[1] It lays down the proposition (*Satz*), There is no philosophy of history possible, and endeavours to establish it by argument. Had the essay been completed, there must have been the counter-proposition (*Gegensatz*) with its argument, and the reconciliation of the proposition and counter-proposition, —a reconciliation, or, as Schelling would have said, *dialektische Lösung*, which could only have consisted in showing that a philosophy of history, although in some respects impossible, is in other respects, or within certain limits, possible. In what remains of the essay, philosophy is assumed to be *a priori* science; while all that occurs according to mechanical laws, or in a necessary cycle, or that can be determined *a priori*, is argued to fall without the sphere of history. Philosophy and history are obviously on this view irreconcilable or mutually exclusive, and the notion of a philosophy of history is self-contradictory.

Our author repeats the thoughts contained in the article just referred to, and at the same time supplements and completes them in his 'System des transcendentalen Idealismus,' which was published in 1800. In this work we see him not far beyond the beginning of his divergence from Fichte. He

[1] Schelling's 'Sämmtliche Werke,' $\frac{I}{I}$. 466-473.

gradually learned that the pure one-sided subjective idealism of the original Fichtean philosophy was too narrow—that it rather suppressed than explained nature.[1] A variety of influences and considerations led him to lay more and more emphasis on nature, and so to work himself out of an idealism which separated itself from realism, which glorified mind by virtually effacing matter, which in exalting the abstract moral law, denied all worth to concrete and sensuous existence. History taught him that the progress of philosophy had always been dependent on the progress of physical science. Herder had resisted the critical philosophy, and Goethe had stood aloof from the idealism derived from it, as at most but half-truths; and although the polemic of the one may not have been very successful, nor the dislike of the other grounded on conclusive reasons, the resistance and aversion of such men were in themselves significant facts, and what they had actually accomplished in literature and science was no bad vindication of their views. Romanticism and all the mystic influences associated with it were working in the spiritual atmosphere towards the fusion of ideality and reality into one.[2] Experimental physics had been attracting attention to itself by numerous remarkable discoveries which had discredited in men's minds a merely mechanical explanation of the physical world, and with these discoveries and the speculations and hopes connected with them, Schelling became acquainted and deeply impressed during his stay at Leipsig.[3] The action of all these circum-

[1] There is a very careful and detailed exposition of the successive modifications in Schelling's views regarding the ultimate principle of his philosophy—the Absolute—so far as the period of which this chapter treats is concerned, in the two last articles of the second volume of Professor Hoffmann's 'Philosophische Schriften.' The essays of Dr Hoffmann—the most distinguished and zealous of Baader's disciples—are, I may add, extremely worthy of the attention of philosophers and theologians.

[2] On the relation of Schelling to Romanticism, the reader may consult the work of R. Haym, 'Die Romantische Schule' (1870). Whoever wishes to understand the general spiritual influences amidst which Schelling lived, should study Dilthey's 'Leben Schleiermachers,' Bd. i. (1870)—a most remarkable contribution not only to biography but to history.

[3] Among his contemporaries, Kielmeyer, Eschenmayer, J. W. Ritter, and Baader, exerted most influence in turning Schelling's thoughts in the direction of physical speculation. That the physio-philosophy which resulted from that

stances on his susceptible, poetical, fervent mind, had for result a philosophy which sought to extend the kingdom of idealism over the whole of nature, while doing it no injustice—nay, while representing it in all the beauty and glory with which it is seen by the eye of the poet.

As early as 1800 he had come to think that the perfected theory of nature would resolve the whole of nature into intelligence, all the laws of physical phenomena into laws of unconscious intuition and of a self-sustaining, self-organising life, not essentially different from that of the conscious human soul. "The dead and unconscious products of nature," he says, "are the abortive attempts of nature to reflect herself; so-called dead nature is but unripe intelligence, and in her phenomena the character of intelligence is really, although unconsciously, revealed. The highest goal, that of becoming wholly an object to herself, is first attained by nature through what is highest and last, reflection, which is nothing else than man, or, more generally, what we call reason, through which nature first completely returns into herself, and whereby it becomes obvious, that nature is originally identical with what is known in us as intelligent and conscious." It seemed, therefore, to Schelling at this period, to be as necessary to derive intelligence from nature as nature from intelligence; and that philosophy had, in fact, both problems to solve, the former as philosophy of nature, and the latter as transcendental philosophy. From this point of view the 'System of Transcendental Idealism' was written.

It is pervaded, like all the writings published by Schelling after he had ceased to be a disciple of Fichte, by the idea of universal development. Everywhere there is held to be development, dynamic movement, organic process. Nothing is really dead, mechanical, inorganic. Nature is visible soul, soul invisible nature, and both advance incessantly by an uninterrupted succession of stages and gradation of forms. The doctrine of development, which is, of course, a most important

direction having been given to his thoughts has exercised a vast influence on all the departments of physical science is undeniable, although there is room for any amount of discussion as to the measure in which that influence was beneficial or injurious.

one in the science of history, has never had a devotee more convinced of its truth than Schelling; and in the work before us he has applied it to the whole worlds, both of matter and spirit, as co-ordinate and essentially identical realms, with an unsurpassed ingenuity and boldness. The speculative grounds, however, on which he rests it, few if any of its advocates would now maintain to be valid.

The pages expressly devoted to history are not many.[1] They belong to that portion of the work in which the principles of transcendental idealism are applied to what is called Practical Philosophy, in treating of which Schelling explains very much as Fichte had done what is implied in freedom, right, or natural law, and the State; adopts Kant's thought that the realisation of a perfect political constitution or State is the object of history; and endorses his theory of a universal peace to be secured through "a parliament of man, a federation of the world." He is thus led to the consideration of history as an object of philosophy, and to the statement of views regarding it which rest on principles more his own.

As nature is the object of theoretical philosophy, so, he holds, is history the object of practical philosophy, and the special problem of the philosophy of history is to determine whether in history individual free-will excludes necessity, or is somehow combined with and subject to it. To elucidate this problem, he first insists on the dependence of history on the individual consciousness, and of the latter on history. Whatever is, is for the individual only so far as he is conscious of it; past history, consequently, exists only as phenomenon of consciousness. It is for each man just what his own individual consciousness is. But each individual consciousness, again, is what it is through belonging to a particular age, with its particular character, measure of progress in culture, &c.; and that age can only be what it is through the whole of past history having been what it has been. Thus history depends on the individual consciousness; and that the individual consciousness should be what it is, the whole of past history was necessary.

Our author next proceeds to argue that the end of history

[1] S.W., $\frac{1}{111}$. 587-604.

being what it is, a reign of universal justice, of itself proves that history is not abandoned to chance, not composed of an accidental succession of events, but is pervaded by a plan which connects the acts of which it consists, notwithstanding that these acts are the products of freedom. The notion of history, or history in the strict and proper sense of the term, does not comprehend all kinds of events. It excludes mere natural events, whatever occurs at fixed and regular intervals, and whatever can be ascertained *a priori*. It is neither an absolutely lawless series of events nor an absolutely regular series of events. Only beings capable of progressive approximation to the attainment of an ideal can have a history. Human history is the gradual realisation of the ideal of universal justice by the entire species. It is therefore characterised by a union of freedom and necessity; it is the product of a freedom which is somehow pervaded by necessity; it is composed of the acts of countless conscious subjects—*i.e.*, of countless free acts; yet these acts form a world of order, the laws of which, lying beyond the consciousness of individual subjects, are objective and necessary.

But how can this be? How can freedom or subjectivity and necessity or objectivity be conceived of as so united in history that order will guarantee freedom, and freedom will produce order? Only, argues Schelling, through the working of a principle superior both to subject and object, which cannot be either, and yet is that in which they are one. This principle he calls the absolute identity, and describes as being, while devoid of consciousness, yet the source of all consciousness; the eternal sun of the realm of spirits; an object of our faith, but not of our knowledge, being hid from us by its very brightness; the invisible root of which intelligences are only potences or functions. History is the evolution of this principle, the Absolute, which expresses itself more or less in all actions, and by doing so connects and harmonises them, confers on them regularity and law, and composes out of them, free although they be, a magnificent poem or drama. In the recognition of the plot or plan of that drama, and the reference of it to its ultimate source or ground—the absolute—reflection attains to the apprehension

of providence, or religion in the only true sense of the word. While working in every place and through all time, the absolute can in no place, and at no time, fully express or realise itself. Were it to do so, nothing else would be—neither individuals, nor freedom. It reveals itself, however, only through the free play of individual wills, and could not be, were these wills not free, so that they are fellow-workers with it. Thus the consequence of the absolute working through intelligent beings is that their actions, those which constitute history, are neither exclusively free nor necessary, but both free and necessary.

In the progressive self-evolution of the absolute, or gradual self-revelation of God, which, according to Schelling, constitutes history, three periods may be distinguished. The first has as dominant principle *destiny*, a blind force which coldly and ruthlessly destroys what is grandest and noblest; it may be called the tragic period of history, being that of the ruin of the oldest and most marvellous empires of the world, of the first and fairest flowers of the tree of humanity. The second period is that in which the blind power of destiny or fate gives place to *nature*, to a physical law which overrules freedom, and so produces at last a certain mechanical regularity in the course of human affairs; it begins with the conquests of the Roman republic. The third period is that in which what manifested itself in the two former periods as fate and nature reveals itself as *providence*, and in which it is apparent that the fate and nature of these earlier periods were the imperfect and initial manifestations of providence. When this third period will be we know not; but when it will be, God will be.

In the lectures on the 'Method of Academic Study' ('Vorlesungen über die Methode akademischen Studiums'[1]), delivered at Jena in 1802, and published in the following year, Schelling is found to have advanced to the point where Hegel at once joins on to and breaks off from him. These lectures give a survey of the whole field of academic study, and, indeed, an encyclopedic view of science from the standpoint of absolute identity

[1] Sämmtliche Werke, $\frac{I}{V}$.

and idealism. I shall very briefly indicate the more important opinions contained in them relative to history.

In the second and eighth lectures, Schelling maintains on the subject of the origin of civilisation the same hypothesis which Fichte, as we have seen, shortly afterwards presented in a more developed form. He argues that science and religion have to a certain extent been transmitted from a primitive, highly endowed, and favoured people; that man has not raised himself from instinct to consciousness, from an animal to a rational condition, but has had the rudiments of all knowledge, practical wisdom, and religion taught to him; that his first estate was one not of barbarism, but of culture.

The eighth and ninth lectures, although entitled respectively "On the Historical Construction of Christianity," and "On the Study of Theology," may be regarded as partly a supplement to, and partly an elucidation of, the vague and general account of the epochs of history given in the 'System of Transcendental Idealism.' For some reason or other,—probably from mere want of time and space—certainly not, as Herr Noack affirms, from ignorance, —Schelling had been altogether silent in that earlier work as to the place and significance of Christianity in history, and he here attempts to supply the defect. He conceives of history as a higher potence of the absolute than nature, the ideal side or expression of the absolute, as the other is its real side or expression; and in history itself, of the modern world as holding the same relation to the ancient world which nature does to history in general. The ancient world is, as it were, the natural or real side of history, and in it the infinite is only seen as in the finite, and consequently as subordinate to it; the modern world is its ideal or spiritual side, and in it the finite is only seen as in and dependent on the infinite. The principle of the ancient world attained its fullest realisation in Grecian polytheism, which viewed the whole universe, gods included, as nature. Christianity views it as a manifestation of the absolute, sees in every moment of time a stage or phase of that manifestation, and so is in its very essence historical. Its primary characteristic is that it regards the universe as *history*, a moral kingdom, a work of providence. It has at once completed and abolished

the old world because it sets forth an incarnation of God in man through which the finite is reconciled to the infinite, and it has initiated the new world, the period of providence, by proclaiming the return of the God-man into the bosom of the absolute after the end of the incarnation was accomplished, and by promising the coming of the Spirit. It is only, according to Schelling, as thus an historical necessity, and a complete revolution in history, that Christianity can be understood, or theology profitably studied, and only from the Christian point of view is history itself intelligible.[1]

The tenth lecture consists of general remarks on the study of history and jurisprudence. As to the former, which alone here concerns us, Schelling begins with the statement, that, as the absolute manifests itself as one and the same in the double form of nature and history, so theology, as the indifference point of the real sciences, breaks off on the one hand into history, and on the other into natural science, each of which considers its object apart from the other and from the supreme unity, yet each of which is capable of going back to the central and primordial knowledge. The ordinary conception of nature is that in which everything happens through necessity—and of history, that in which everything happens through freedom; but this conception takes no account of the connection which both nature and history have with the absolute. History is a higher potence than nature, expressing ideally what that does really, but they differ only as potences or formally; essentially they are identical, and in virtue of this identity nature is inclusive of a form of freedom, and history of a form of necessity. The end of history, indeed, is the formation of an *ideal nature*, the State, an outward organism in which, through the working of freedom, necessity and freedom are harmonised.

With reference to the question, whether history can be science, Schelling observes that history as such is the antithesis of science, and so, of course, cannot itself be science; and that if the real

[1] A repetition of this so-called "historical construction" of Christianity, and some additional details, will be found in the 'Philosophie der Kunst,' which consists of lectures first delivered in 1802-3, but not published in Schelling's lifetime.—See S.W., $\frac{I}{V}$. 425-432.

sciences are syntheses of philosophy and history, history alone can no more be such a science than it can be philosophy. He then describes the different points of view from which history can be studied. The highest is the religious, from whence all history is looked upon as the work of providence. It is not essentially different from the philosophical point of view, and properly falls within theology or philosophy. To attain a religious or philosophical comprehension of history, it is necessary to start, not from history, but from theology or philosophy. Opposed to this, the absolute or speculative point of view is the empirical, which again has two sides or aspects—the critical and the pragmatical—seeing that the mind may either content itself with the mere ascertainment of what has taken place, or may, after having satisfied itself as to that, endeavour to subordinate the whole of the events to some general truth or principle, and to show that they have taken place to bring about some end. Polybius and Tacitus are adduced as examples of pragmatical historians, and ranked decidedly below Herodotus and Thucydides, but far above those into whose feeble and unworthy hands the composition of history had fallen in Germany. A third point of view, and the highest and truest of all, is that of art, which shows us the ideal in the real, not like philosophy apart from it, and which exhibits more perfectly than either religion or philosophy the harmony of necessity and freedom, by exhibiting it in the sphere of actual occurrences. Art is the final and most satisfying revelation of the reality and working of that ultimate principle which, although the cause of all that is objective, never becomes objective itself. Historical art is the most perfect revelation of the working of the absolute principle in the department of human interests and actions. It is bound not to despise or do violence to the particular facts, but to deal honestly with them; yet, at the same time, it must so apprehend and reflect them in their deeper and wider relations as to show that they belong to a system of eternal order, and are expressions of the highest ideas; it must do justice to empirical causes, yet so exhibit them that they will appear to be the means and instruments of a supreme necessity; it must aim, in fact, to be a mirror of the universal spirit, by look-

ing into which at any point we shall see some act of a divine drama. Schelling concludes what he has here to say on history with a few slight remarks in favour of its being studied, and written as if it were a sort of drama or epic poem.

A year later he returned to the subject in a small treatise, entitled 'Philosophie und Religion.' With this work begins what is usually called the fourth period of his philosophical career; and from the date of its publication onwards, the mysticism which lay in germ in his previous writings, flourishes conspicuously, and with ever-increasing luxuriance. The new point of view, the central thought of this 'Philosophy and Religion,' was a new conception of the relation of the universe to the absolute,—one which naturally opened up boundless vistas of theosophical, theogonical, and cosmological fancy, in which the mind of Schelling wandered "in endless mazes lost" for fifty long years. It was that the finite and relative world can be no emanation or evolution, no direct product or immediate manifestation of the infinite and absolute, no true continuation of it, but a something, and yet essentially a nothing, radically separated from it, only indirectly and negatively related to it. The ideas of things are in the absolute, but the things themselves owe their existence to being broken off, or having falling away, from the absolute. Schelling tries to explain how this sad accident, this break or fall, occurred, and flatters himself that his explanation solves, among various other mysteries, the greatest of all, the origin of evil; but this I must pass over in silence, merely indicating that he adopts the "old holy doctrine" of the pre-existence and fall of souls in the poetical form given to it by Plato in the Phædrus;[1] that he not only insists, as he had repeatedly done before, that the human race started with a primitive revelation of art, science, religion, and civilisation, but that it was preceded on the earth by a higher order of beings, who, after having sown the divine seed of *ideas*, the elements of all culture, disappeared;[2] and that he maintains, that after their departure there was a gradual deterioration of the globe and a gradual degradation of men.[3]

The following passage is the statement of his general notion

[1] S.W., $\frac{I}{VI}$. 47. [2] S.W., $\frac{I}{VI}$. 57-58. [3] S.W., $\frac{I}{VI}$. 59.

of history. "God is the absolute harmony of necessity and freedom, and this harmony cannot be expressed in the individual, but only in history as a whole; consequently only history as a whole is a revelation of God, and this revelation is accomplished by a successive development. Although history represents only one side of the destinies of the universe, it is not to be conceived of as partial, but as symbolic of the others, which repeat and reflect themselves in it in their entirety and with clearness. It is an epic, composed in the mind of God, and consists of two chief parts: the first describing the departure of humanity from its centre to the utmost point of distance therefrom; and the second, its return. The one is, as it were, the Iliad, and the other the Odyssey, of history. In the one the direction is centrifugal; in the other, centripetal. The great purpose of the entire phenomenal universe in this way expresses itself in history. Ideas, spirits, must fall from their centre to become particular in nature, the general sphere of the fall; that afterwards, as particular, they may return to the Indifference, and, reconciled to it, may be able to abide in it, without disturbing it." [1]

This view of the course of history plainly implies that it has not been one of continuous progress—that, at a certain point, a revolution has taken place in it—that the direction in which humanity is now advancing is the opposite of that once followed; and in a work written by Schelling in the same year as the 'Philosophy and Religion,' although not published until after his death—I mean the 'System of the whole of Philosophy, and especially of the Philosophy of Nature'—the notion of a continuous historical progress is directly assailed and rejected.[2] It is so in connection with the proposition that the highest aim of every rational being—individual or species—is identity with God,—a proposition also insisted on in 'Philosophy and Religion,' and there associated with the transmigration of souls, life on the stars, and other similar dogmas.

Still onwards went Schelling on his adventurous way. Five years later we find him in his 'Philosophical Inquiries into the Essence of Human Freedom,' under the inspiration and guidance

[1] S.W., $\frac{I}{VI}$. 57. [2] S.W., $\frac{I}{VI}$. 563-564.

of that most profound theosophist, Jacob Böhme, applying his method of speculative construction as confidently to the very being of God as he had previously done to nature and man, and connecting with a remarkable ingenuity the whole of the finite universe, matter and spirit, chaos and order, evil and good, to one or other of the moments of the divine life. Perhaps this treatise on human freedom is the profoundest of Schelling's writings, and it is at least that by which he has exercised most influence on the course of theological thought; but all that I have a right here to say in connection with it is, that it represents history as a long conflict between self-will and the universal will, between evil and good, which ends in the latter subduing and reconciling all things unto itself, and the turning-point of which is the incarnation of Christ, the opposition of the universal will to the self-will directly in the human person.

Soon after the appearance of the work just referred to, Schelling began to show as much anxiety to conceal his speculations from the public as he had previously shown to spread them, and for forty-five years he maintained an almost uninterrupted and almost unparalleled literary silence. The system which under the name of positive philosophy he expounded in Berlin after the death of Hegel, cannot be spoken of at this stage, which, on the other hand, is an appropriate station for our casting a glance back on the views already stated.

They are obviously mere *views;* and even when collected, and, as far as possible, combined, they form no general system. They are vague, incomplete, and sometimes inconsistent with one another. They are, at the best, but what have been called "genial intuitions," never the established conclusions of science. They are often airy and unsubstantial imaginations; and even when reasoned inferences, they are loosely drawn from arbitrary principles. The fundamental objection to them is one which applies to all the other speculations of Schelling—viz., that they are unproved, unverified, by any method which can possibly lead to truth. Of such methods there are only two really distinct, induction and deduction, which, however, may, and often must, be conjoined, and made to assist each

other; but Schelling's mode of procedure is neither induction, deduction, nor their legitimate combination. It is a method of his own, a device of his individual will, and therefore a false method. Induction—the gradual and regular ascent from experience to science, from facts to laws—is rejected with contempt, on the assumption that facts or phenomena, the objects of the perceptive powers, the data or materials of induction, are destitute of truth and validity. Schelling, like his contemporaries Fichte and Hegel, allowed his mind to be possessed with the notion which had led astray Plato and his followers in antiquity,—namely, that science is not to be reached through observation, analysis, and generalisation of phenomena; that there can be no true science of the laws of phenomena; but that to arrive at science the mind must get beyond and behind phenomena, through and above them, as it were, into a region where change and time, contingency and particularity, are unknown. It is a notion which has a powerful charm for the imagination and the higher sympathies of our nature, but which will not bear the examination of reason, and which has received the most conclusive refutation from the whole history of science. It has never led to any real discovery; and to set aside for it a method which, like induction, can point to countless glorious triumphs, would be an act of ruinous folly.

But deduction is in the hands of Schelling as badly treated as induction. To possess any worth, that method must start from principles which are either self-evident to every sound intellect, or fully established by a foregoing induction. Schelling, of course, does not start from inductively-established principles, but as little does he start from self-evident principles. He holds that philosophy can only begin with the absolute, the identity of subject and object, the indifference of the ideal and real; and avows that that, instead of being a principle self-evident to every sound human intelligence, is out of the reach of ordinary intelligence altogether. To all that commonly goes by the name of intelligence it is not an absurdity, simply because it is a blank. If such intelligence will foolishly try to apprehend it, it will, as a punishment for dealing with a matter too high for it, land itself in absurdity. When we ask Schelling, How then

are we to get at a first principle which is neither self-evident nor to be reached by ordinary logic? He tells us with a candour, the *naïveté* of which is charming, that it is by "intellectual intuition," by a sinking back out of consciousness and reflection into identity with the absolute, by a mystic act through which the soul transcends ordinary thought and relative being, by a flash of genius, a gleam of inspiration, such as are elicited from poetic and prophetic souls. So there is the absolute "shot out of a pistol;" there is the first principle high up in the air; and yet *that* is the foundation on which Schelling would have us build the temple of science.

The absolute apprehended by so strange and mysterious an act as the intellectual intuition, could not be other than a strange and mysterious existence, and that Schelling should have found it the veriest Proteus was only natural. It was no independent objective reality, no eternal unchanging truth, but essentially a creation of imagination, which it was almost inevitable should continue to be moulded and fashioned, even as a first principle, by the power which had produced it, into manifold forms. Hence the rapid succession of systems constructed by Schelling. Hence his "leaping in such a variety of directions, according to the latest goad," which is certainly apt to seem, what Dr Stirling pronounces it, "not an edifying spectacle." These varied constructions, sudden leaps, abrupt changes, are not to be regarded, however, as on the whole either unnatural or inconsistent; and they are even, perhaps, no more derogatory in reality either to his insight or love of truth than Hegel's labouring contentedly throughout his entire philosophical career in building up a single gigantic system on the particular pinnacle of cloud to which Schelling had lifted him. They were the natural consequences of trying to build or walk at all on what, although it had a delusive semblance of solidity, was always gliding away. And that such was the character of Schelling's absolute—that it was a cloudy illusion, an appearance and not a verity—I deem sufficiently proved even by the brief argumentation of Sir William Hamilton in his celebrated essay on the Philosophy of the Unconditioned; although I am aware, of course, that a singularly

fine metaphysical thinker, Professor Ferrier, has challenged the soundness of that argumentation, and maintained Schelling to be substantially right, if there be, as he holds there is, any such thing as truth for intelligence simply or in itself, truth *common* to *all* intelligences, and not merely *peculiar* to *some* intelligences.[1] In so doing, Professor Ferrier believed himself defending his own faith in the absolute against the attack of his illustrious contemporary and friend; but, by a strange oversight, he failed to observe that the rejection of the absolute as understood by Kant, Schelling, Hegel, and Cousin, was quite compatible with the acceptance of it as understood by himself, and he unconsciously ascribed both to Schelling and Hamilton opinions precisely the opposite of those which they really held. Sir William Hamilton's belief in the relativity of knowledge is quite consistent with Ferrier's belief in an absolute in knowledge, while Schelling's opinion is inconsistent with both. Sir William Hamilton's refutation of Schelling, and indeed the whole reasoning of his essay, proceeds on the supposition or principle that there is one truth at least common to all intelligences, or absolute in Ferrier's sense of the word,—viz., that no intelligence can know what is out of relation to its own powers of knowing —that every act of knowledge involves the condition of subject and object—that a unity of cognition exclusive of the dualism of subject and object is inconceivable and absurd. He argues for the relativity of knowledge against Schelling, on the supposition that he denied an absolute in cognition in that sense by affirming an absolute really out of relation to intelligence—an absolute not common to, not present in, all intelligence, but one, on the contrary, which all that is commonly and properly called intelligence is, by the very law of its being, by its constitution simply as intelligence, shut out from the possibility of knowing. Now there cannot reasonably be a doubt that Sir William Hamilton was thoroughly justified in regarding Schelling as an advocate of the absolute in the latter sense, and not in that which Professor Ferrier generously transferred to him. The use of the word which gave a rational meaning may have been that which Schelling ought to have adopted; but it was certainly not

[1] 'Lectures and Philosophical Remains,' vol. ii. 551-555.

that which he actually adopted; he preferred a use of it which gave a meaning excessively absurd and fantastical, and instead of being credited with what he ought to have done, must be held responsible for what he did.

It would be easy to prove that his so-called method of construction, the process of reasoning by which he tries to show how all things issue from the absolute, is loose and unsatisfactory in the last degree, and his particular arguments very often so flimsy and fanciful, that in any truly scientific discussion or even deliberation on practical matters, arguments of a similar character would inevitably produce not conviction but derision or amusement; but I must now confine my attention to his views on the course of history. Now these views not only derive no confirmation or benefit from the system on which they have been engrafted, but have been vitiated in various ways through their connection with it; chiefly, however, inasmuch as its immediate and manifest consequence is that the true subject of history is not man but God, not humanity but the absolute. The philosophy of Schelling comes to history with the fixed foregone conclusion that it is a self-evolution of the absolute, a gradual self-manifestation of God, the course or process by which God comes to attain self-consciousness and to realise Himself; that humanity is only a sort of mirror or mask of the absolute; that men, free finite persons, have no real being, and their acts no real significance, apart from the All One, an impersonal infinite. But surely this is not a view to begin the study of history with, to bring into and impose upon history. It may be a correct view, yet certainly the first and natural impression which history produces on the mind is that man is its true subject, and the actions of men its constituents; the operations of the absolute are altogether invisible to ordinary observation; human history appears as manifestly to have to do with men only, as natural history with beasts only; and we have no right to *assume* that this impression is a delusion, although we may have a right to try to *prove* it so, and to set it aside when its inadequacy or erroneousness has been made out. If Schelling had endeavoured to establish by the analysis and examination of the events of history that the pantheistic conception of it was

the correct one—that it was really, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, the self-evolution of the absolute—he had only done what he was perfectly justified in doing; but when, apart from any examination of the kind, and in opposition to what appeared to be the natural interpretation of the facts, he laid that down as a premiss or principle, his procedure was wholly indefensible; it was forcing a philosophy on history, which is a very different operation from drawing a philosophy out of history. Unfortunately this was a difference which Schelling could not and would not see; or rather, for him there was no philosophy or science in history, and consequently none to be got out of it; all the philosophy or science of history lay out of itself in theology or metaphysics.

When history is described as a self-evolution of the absolute, or as substantially derived from the absolute either by emanation or disseverance, there is a delusive appearance, without any of the reality, of explanation. Because our eyes are accustomed to see rays of light issuing by emanation from the sun, plants from seeds by evolution, one piece of matter from another by disseverance, our sluggish minds are apt to acquiesce in the pantheistic transference of these relations to the connection between the infinite and the finite, God and the world or man, as in some measure accounting for and illustrating the derivation of the latter from the former, when, in reality, it is a wholly illegitimate procedure, in which images of sense are given and received for truths of reason. Emanation, evolution, disseverance, fall, are words without the slightest meaning when used of the absolute; the very fact, indeed, of their being so used, proves that the absolute to which they are applied is a coarse creation of the sensuous imagination. Schelling made many efforts to connect the infinite with the finite, to exhibit history as a phase or potence of the one true existence, consistently with pure idealism; his merit being that he was never long in finding out that he had been unsuccessful, and his fault that he never learned that the task was hopeless.

He deserves praise for having so clearly seen that history combines freedom and necessity, and can only be understood when the sense, extent, and mode in which it does so are ascer-

tained. He has repeatedly declared the discovery of that to be *the* problem of the philosophy of history, and undoubtedly it is one of its most important problems. It seems to me that his chief service to the philosophy of history was his clear statement of this problem, and his clear recognition of its importance in historical science. The solution of it, however, which he indicated, was more than a mere failure. He sincerely wished to harmonise freedom with necessity; but the attempt to do so by referring them to the absolute, only made obvious that there was no place in his system for true freedom, for independent individual wills. His conception of the absolute, and of construction as the method of philosophy, bound him in logical consistency to sacrifice all particular wills to the universal will, to acknowledge only one will in the universe as real, and all other wills only as apparent, its passive organs; and to maintain that even that one will was neither in itself free nor guided by consciousness, but worked itself blindly and necessarily out of darkness, and almost out of nonentity into consciousness, and towards true or personal Godship, which it has, however, not yet reached; and all his struggles, repeated, earnest, and vigorous as they were, failed to break the chains which fettered him to these consequences, the denial of true personality and liberty both to God and man. I need not describe the various attempts which he made to deliver himself, nor show that they were futile. His positive philosophy, whatever else it was, was a confession that his earlier or negative philosophy had in all its stages failed to rise to a true theism, and failed to do justice to the will and its freedom.

The division of history which he gives us in the system of transcendental idealism—viz., into the three periods of fate, nature, and providence—has no value, as he does not in the least prove that Egypt, China, India, Persia, and Greece were more under the law of fate, and less under that of nature, than Rome and modern nations, or that the reign of providence has still to make its appearance; and, in fact, in the Lectures on the 'Method of Academic Study,' he virtually withdrew this threefold division, and substituted for it a twofold one, having become convinced in the interval that Christianity, of which he had taken no account before, was the centre, and at the same

time the key, of all history; a circumstance which shows how hastily he extemporised the formulæ which he professed to be the expression of the fundamental laws of human development. It was the fashion with the German idealists who succeeded Kant to spare themselves the labour of ascertaining, analysing, and generalising the facts of history, by assuming that the sum and substance of the philosophy of history was to be found in some formula of development and division derivable *a priori* from the idea; and, unfortunately, of this indolent and illusory fashion Schelling was a leader.

For holding that the human race has not civilised itself, he had, apart from tradition, no other reason to give than an assertion that it could not civilise itself; and for that assertion, obviously more difficult to establish than that which it was employed to prove, he gave no reason at all; so that his opinion as to the primitive state of man would have been entitled to little weight, even if he had not, as he has, connected with it a crowd of baseless fancies, such as that of there having been a higher and nobler race of intelligences before man upon the earth.

No objection can fairly be taken to Schelling's affirmation that history is a divine poem, whether of the epic or tragic order, so long as it is allowed to be merely a rhetorical figure, an illustrative comparison. Faith and reason both look on history as ruled, even where it seems most irregular and discordant, by laws which make it, as a whole, beautiful and harmonious; and on that ground it may appropriately and significantly be called a poem—epic in its continuous flow, tragic from its ever-recurring catastrophes, and lyric as an anthem of praise to the glory of God. It is long since St Augustine compared the ordered series of the centuries to an antistrophic hymn, pervaded by an antithetic parallelism, which turns on the call of God and the response of man: "Deus ordinem sæculorum tanquam pulcherrimum carmen ex quibusdam quasi antithetis honestavit." [1] But more than a graceful and significant figure of speech, a fine similitude, the statement of Schelling is not; and it is a something almost incredible, that by some of his disciples it should have been

[1] De Civ. Dei., xi. 18.

spoken of as in itself a theory of history, an expression of the veritable sense of history. Obviously it has, and can have, no truth except as a figure ; when it ceases to be used as a figure, it loses all the truth, and even all the sense that is in it. To call history a poem is true if you mean only that in certain respects it is like a poem ; erroneous if you mean that it is so in all respects, for in many respects it is unlike any kind of poem ; and not only utterly false, but positively nonsensical if you mean that it is not merely *like*, but really *is*, a poem.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SCHOOL OF SCHELLING: STUTZMANN, STEFFENS, AND GOERRES.

FICHTE exerted great, Schelling extraordinary, influence in all departments of German thought. Both changed their principles, or at least their points of view, so often and rapidly, that it was impossible for them to form a large compact body of adherents with a definite self-consistent creed; but they originated a variety of schools, and gave impulse and direction to a vast number of persons. In this chapter I purpose examining the writings of some of the authors thus influenced. In literary history they are all included in what is vaguely and ambiguously called the Romantic School.[1] They are all more or less fanciful and mystical thinkers, wonderfully bold in assertion, and unusually weak in demonstration—very religious, very poetical, and utterly unscientific.

I.

The first who must be summoned before us is John Joshua Stutzmann (1777-1816), who was a professor at Erlangen, and who wrote various philosophical works which no man need much regret being ignorant of.[2] Fortunately one alone concerns the present writer or his readers. It is the 'Philosophie der Geschichte der Menscheit,' published at Nürnberg in 1808.

[1] Regarding which see the work of Haym already mentioned. The best account of the theories of the philosophers of the Schellingian school is that in Erdmann's 'Geschichte d. n. Phil.,' Bd. iii. Abth. 2.

[2] The most important of them, perhaps, are the 'Philosophie des Universums' (1806), and the 'Grundzüge des Standpunctes, Geistes und Gesetzes der universellen Philosophie' (1811).

Traces of the influence of Herder, Heeren, Eichhorn, Von Müller, are very visible in it; but essentially it is an attempt to combine and systematise the historical views of Fichte and Schelling, in order thus to arrive at a complete philosophy of history.[1] That is its merit—a considerable merit, but almost its only one; an able or important work it cannot be said to be, and a mere indication of its contents must suffice.

The first and perhaps the best chapter in the book, is on the possibility of a philosophy of human history. In substance it is an argument to the effect that a philosophy of history must, from the very nature both of philosophy and history, be held to be possible, for philosophy is the science of reason, and reason is the true essence and content of human life and history.

The second is on the nature of man, as the subject of history. The true nature of man, it affirms, is reason; and reason has two sides, an objective and a subjective, the former being what is called sense, and the latter understanding. This appears very questionable psychology; but the historical application of it is still more questionable. The principle of the ancient world, we are told, was sense or reason in its objective aspect, and that of the modern world is understanding or reason as subjective. Originally these two principles were one, and they will be finally one again in a higher mode. It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that this is nearly a reproduction of Fichte's view of the course of historical development; it must be quite unnecessary to remark on its inadequacy—its arbitrariness.

The third chapter is on the essence of the eternal, as the principle of history. It is an attempt to connect absolute being with the phenomenal world by means of those hypotheses of infinite self-potentiation, divine ideas, primitive types, dualism of opposing forces, &c., which Schelling had rendered popular; in other words, it is not of a philosophico-historical, but of a theologico-metaphysical character, and neither luminous nor illuminating.

The next chapter should be the most important, for it pro-

[1] What he here endeavoured to do for history he had previously sought to do for religion in an 'Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion,' and 'Reflections on Religion and Christianity.'

fesses to be an investigation of the essence of human history in general, and an outline of the entire course and philosophy thereof. It treats the subject from a theological point of view, affirming that the divine idea is the true content of all that is realised in time—*i. e.*, of all history ; that time is the form of the manifestation of the divine action, as space is the form of the manifestation of the divine Being; and that history is the life and essence of the Eternal displayed in the sequence or succession of existence. Now all these statements may be true, and the philosophy of history may either itself prove or help theology to prove them true; but it ought not to assume or merely assert them. When even religion acknowledges itself under obligation to supply reasons for the faith which it demands, a philosophy which professes to be the science of reason itself, ought certainly not to expect its dicta to be received by faith without reason. The whole course of human development is then divided by Stutzmann into four periods or ages: the first being that of innocence or rational instinct ; the second, that of the ancient world, or of reason in its objective direction; the third, that of the modern world, or of reason in its subjective direction ; and the fourth, that which combines the principles of the second and third in the unity of fully developed and self-reconciled reason. These periods, it is maintained, constitute the childhood, youth, manhood, and old age of the human species, on the ground that the history of the race may be justly compared to the life of the individual.

The fifth chapter treats of the relation of human history to the external universe, and especially to the earth, the stage on which it is transacted. It is full of far-fetched hypotheses and fanciful analogies, mostly revolving round the bizarre notion that the ancient world was centrifugal, while the modern is centripetal, and the future will unite both, as the East originally did, but in a more perfect form.

The three chapters which close the work apply the views contained in those which precede them to the explanation of the characters and histories of the oriental, classical, and Christian ages. They contain nothing striking in thought, and display only a moderate erudition.

II.

Henry Steffens (1773-1845) was a man far superior to Stutzmann in intellect, and of so admirable and interesting a character that his autobiography ('Was Ich erlebte') is very readable, even although in ten volumes. Born in Norway, and half a Scandinavian by descent, he was nevertheless wholly German in feeling, and, indeed, was of all German professors, with the exception of Fichte, the one who threw himself with the greatest devotedness into the struggle against Napoleon. His ardent patriotism contrasted with the philosophic indifferentism of his friend and master, Schelling, who more than once wrote to him, "Why should we cast ourselves into the turmoil of this world? What good will it do? Is it not the case, then, that our kingdom is not of this world?" It was chiefly as a philosophy of nature that the doctrine of Schelling gained his assent and affection. His studies in mineralogy, geology, and natural history, and the impressions made on him by various poets and philosophers, and especially Spinoza, had so prepared his mind for the Natur-Philosophie, that having heard Schelling in his inaugural lecture at Jena expound his idea thereof, and insist on the necessity of proceeding in the study of nature from the point of her essential unity, and on the light that would spread itself over all the branches of natural science so soon as naturalists should dare to plant themselves in this central position of the unity of reason, he was completely carried away, and hastened to him next day to declare himself his disciple. He was the first professional naturalist who attached himself to Schelling unconditionally and with enthusiasm.

The works in which Steffens speculates on physical and organic nature do not here concern us further than that the Anthropology may be so far said to lay a foundation for a philosophy of history, as it endeavours to define and describe the position of man in the universe. It contains three parts; the first treating of what is called geological, the second physiological, and the third psychological anthropology; the first viewing man in relation to the whole development of the earth in the

past, the second in relation to the entire system of organised and animated existence in the present, and the third in relation to the future. It represents him to be the completion or copestone of the past, the centre of the present, and the starting-point of the future.

Steffens was one of the naturalists of the school of Schelling who elaborated and spread the notion that man is the living synthesis of nature,—a being who sums up in himself all its processes in perfection and harmony. The notion originated in remote antiquity, and has been entertained by a great number of thinkers in different lands and ages. In particular, mystics, both heathen and Christian, have cherished the belief that man is a microcosm, and assumed it as a basis for their meditations. But Steffens, Oken, and Carus were the men who, under the impulse of the Natur-Philosophie, first seriously attempted to supply its scientific verification, and to employ it as a fundamental principle in the classification of physical forces, plants, and animals. Man, they endeavoured to prove, was the harmony, type, and standard of nature, by reference to which everything else that it contained ought to have its place, rank, worth, and significance determined. For a considerable time they were almost universally believed to have essentially succeeded, in spite of the multitude of extravagant assertions and deductions interwoven with their argumentation; and although that will now be very generally contested, owing to the prevalence of the Darwinian form of the development theory, no candid critic will question that their labours exercised a profound, and, in the main, beneficial influence on the biological sciences. Historical science was also affected and modified by them, although in a less degree. The researches and speculations of Steffens, Oken, and Carus, did not result in a view of the relation of man to nature, of human to natural history, which subsequent investigation has confirmed, but they certainly contributed in no ordinary degree to open men's minds to the closeness and comprehensiveness of the relation.

Steffens maintains, then, that man includes in himself all the qualities and processes of lower creatures, and ennobles and harmonises them; that nature in all her parts prefigures man, and

in all her functions aspires to what is only satisfied in man; and also that the entire course of the development of the world is one of progress towards individuality, of deliverance from the generic, which culminates in what he calls the "talent" of man, that which is central, essential, and most peculiar in him, his natural individuality, the principle through which God manifests Himself within him, the organ which appropriates the divine grace and the divine love needed by man for the accomplishment of his destiny. The goal of history is the realisation of the divine image in humanity, and the course of history a series of struggles which have been typified in the successive stages of the development of external nature. Steffens, like other followers of Schelling and Schelling himself, has drawn numerous comparisons of the most curious kind between the macrocosm and the microcosm, between the universe and its history and man and his history. It was his belief that the wider history not merely conditioned the narrower, but that it exemplified a plan in essentials the same, and that the two histories in consequence so corresponded as to reflect and mirror each other. It was his belief, also, that man had been ordained to be the regulative principle of the world, and that between him and it there exists an intimate and mysterious sympathy; that spiritual peace produces material order, and the wrath of man the destructiveness of nature; that moral virtues and moral evils find expression in physical blessings and physical defects.

> "In our life alone doth nature live;
> Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud."

The work, however, in virtue of which chiefly Steffens is ranked among historical philosophers, is 'Die gegenwärtige Zeit und wie sie geworden' (The Present Time, and how it has become what it is), which was published in 1817. It is an eloquent, devout, poetical book, luxuriant with thoughts, crowded with bright-coloured pictures; but the history in it is probably not very accurate, and the philosophy woven to a greater extent out of fancy than reason. It is comparatively little tinctured with the principles of Schelling, and is pervaded by an ardent patriotism which Schelling never felt. It is filled with the spirit of the war of liberation—a spirit of reaction against the shallow

cosmopolitanism previously current, of intense nationalism, of burning love of the fatherland, and vehement hatred of what seemed hostile to it. Germany did not throw off the yoke of French tyranny before a great change had taken place within herself. When her armies were first beaten out of France she was as soulless and dead as a nation could be—without faith, without patriotism, without independence—so much the abject creature of her contemptible petty potentates that probably the French conquest was a providential mercy. When her armies marched into France victorious from Waterloo, she had learned in the school of suffering and house of bondage the value of the national life and freedom which she had formerly despised. This change—a reaction at once against her own former self and her oppressor—showed itself in literature as well as in war, and nowhere more distinctly than in Steffens' 'Gegenwärtige Zeit.'

The aim of the work is to trace the path in which God has guided the German people during the centuries of its known existence, and to show the significance of Germany for the future of humanity. Its inspiring principle is not love of science but love of country—not speculative curiosity, but the desire to prove by an historical retrospect that the prosperity of Europe must rest in an especial manner on the prosperity of the German nation.

In the first chapter the three great divisions of the Caucasian family of mankind, which are said to be the Oriental, Greco-Roman, and Germanic, are characterised in a way made familiar by Hegel. The Oriental, the first to flourish, but the first also to become exhausted, has abstract universality for principle, all individual wills being displaced by the one absolute extraneous will of the ruler, so that there is no trace of personal freedom. In the Greco-Roman world the State held the position which in the East was occupied by a single uncontrolled will. The Germans came last, but they brought with them as their original and essential peculiarity the highest principle—that of personal independence. They are depicted as the bravest, truest, noblest race of men that ever lived. It requires to be here remarked that the work of Steffens at present under consideration, and that in which Hegel first sketched the course of historical development, the 'Encyclo-

pædia,' both appeared in the same year, 1817, so that the one author must not be assumed to have borrowed from the other. The 'Philosophische Propädeutik,' written by Hegel during his rectorate at Nürnberg, although only published in 1840, proves that to him at least it was in 1817 no new thought.

The second chapter is designed to show how Christianity responded to the religious aspirations of the ancient Germans, and how it became the principle of their social organisation. From this point of view the medieval life is depicted as a beautiful and exalted form of existence. Steffens opens the following chapter, however, by supposing an historical student to insist on the other side of things in those times, on the arid and bewildering philosophy, the imperfection of the laws, the oppression of the poor, and to maintain that in many respects the new order is better than the old. He grants that the old cannot be brought back, and that the new has some decided advantages over it; but insists that there is not less danger of underestimating than of exaggerating the value of the past, and that the present takes care of itself, while comparatively few realise the true character of the past, and its bearings on the present and future. The answer is so far true, but it is not the whole truth. To underestimate the value of the past is as great a fault as to overestimate it; but that does not prevent its being a fault. It was a merit in Steffens and other writers of the Romantic school insisting that justice should be rendered to the middle ages; but they did only harm by keeping out of sight their defects, and attributing to them excellences which they never possessed, or, in a word, by substituting for the real middle ages others which never existed outside of their own imaginations.

The fourth chapter traces the formation of the modern out of the medieval world as far as the Reformation; and the fifth chapter, which comprises the whole of the second and largest volume of the work, describes how the course of history since the Reformation has issued in society being what it at present is, and particularly in Germanic countries. It is impossible to convey any correct conception of these chapters by a brief summary, and therefore I must content myself with saying that they are most eloquently and attractively written, in spite of

some diffuseness and over-ornamentation, and that they contain a considerable number of true and suggestive observations which a philosophy of history will appropriate and prize.

III.

Joseph Goerres (1776-1848), whom I have next to mention, exerted a very considerable influence both on the political and religious life of Germany. He was in his youth an ardent republican, in his manhood an ardent constitutionalist, and in his later years an ardent ultramontanist. His zeal was always greater than his judgment. His vague, swollen, tumultuous language, the perverse fancifulness and passionate excitement of his mind, his manifold inconsistencies, were in some measure redeemed by his sincerity, outspoken honesty, courage, and real although unregulated genius.

A 'History of Asiatic Myths' is, perhaps, his most important work. It belongs to the same school and epoch of mythological interpretation as Creuzer's Symbolik, and has similar merits and defects—the merits, however, being nearly all less, and the defects greater. Some German authors have spoken of his 'Germany and the Revolution' (1819), and 'Europe and the Revolution' (1821), as contributions to the philosophy of history; but no unprejudiced person who takes the trouble to read these books will find it possible to admit the claim. They are merely political pamphlets written under a strange poetic and prophetic furor, with "Dominus confregit reges, judicabit in nationibus, implebit ruinas, conquassabit capita multorum" for burden—one which naturally displeased the kings, and which so highly displeased the King of Prussia in particular, that he hunted poor Goerres for a time into France.

The only one of his books here entitled to notice consists of three lectures, 'Ueber die Grundlage, Gliederung und Zeitfolge der Weltgeschichte,' delivered at Munich in the chair of universal history established for him in 1827. In this work,[1] which was published in 1830, Goerres professes, 1st, to ascertain and state

[1] There is a review of it by Hegel in the second volume of his 'Vermischte Schriften.'

the fundamental principle of history; 2d, to show how secondary and subordinate principles are connected with the primary and central principles; and 3d, to explain how, through the inner connection of principles, history is an articulated organism which gradually develops itself, and divides into great natural periods, into an ordered succession of spheres, comprehensive of the entire mass of facts.

With respect to the first point, the primary principle of history, the truth on which universal history turns and moves, Goerres has substantially little more to say than that, as there are in regard to physical nature two essentially distinct views, which determine and rule all other views,—the ancient, which made the earth the centre of the universe—and the modern, which makes the sun the centre and the earth a satellite; so there are two fundamentally distinct and opposed views of history,—one nearly as old as history itself, and the other as old—one dating from the origin of sin, and another proper to man's primitive state of intimate communion with God—one ignoring the divine or subjecting it to the material, and another referring everything good and true to the providence and will of God; and that the latter of these views—that which makes God the principle of history, its beginning, middle, and end, which traces its origination to His power, its development to His love, its moral order and judgment to His justice—is entitled to acceptance. That there is in this answer truth of the utmost practical importance few will deny; but before that truth can become an integral part of a philosophy of history, and especially before it can become the very foundation of a philosophy of history, it must be more than merely asserted, it must be proved, and must be so exhibited in relation to the appropriate facts as to leave no doubt of its being the keystone of the whole edifice of history. Nothing of the sort, however, is accomplished, or even attempted, by Goerres. Not only strict demonstration but solid proof of every kind is wanting. Assertions, fancies, phrases, these occupy the place which should have been filled with facts and arguments. In addition, he has completely overlooked, and, indeed, implicitly contradicted, the very important truth suggested by the fact that there is an ancient and a modern view of physical nature, or rather,

that there has been from the most ancient to the most modern times a continuous alteration and enlargement of view—viz., that there has been a correspondent continuous alteration and enlargement of view respecting history. A belief that all higher spiritual truth had been in possession of primitive men, had been shipwrecked by the Fall, had floated down through traditions and mysteries to the present time, and that the growth of the race in religious knowledge was merely their gradual recovery of what they had lost—prevented his perceiving the correspondence mentioned, and necessitated his forming a false notion of the general evolution of history.

With respect to the second point, the relation of the secondary principles to the primary principle of history, Goerres descants on the harmony of the physical world, and its fitness to serve as a basis and model for the harmony of the spiritual world; insists that divine power and human will are not naturally antagonistic to each other or exclusive of each other; tells us of three kingdoms,—that of absolute freedom, the Godhead—that of freedom combined with necessity, the soul of man—and that of pure necessity, nature,—each with its own laws; those of the first having their seat in the bosom of God, while those of the second regulate the operations of the human mind, and those of the last are involved in the constitution of matter; also of three Bibles—the Bible of nature, the Bible of the spirit, and the Bible of history; and he assures us that the laws of these three kingdoms meet and interact in history, and that the teachings of these three Bibles are self-consistent and accordant. But certainly all this, however true, can profit science little or nothing so long as it is, as with Goerres, mere vague rhetorical assertion. Of genuine philosophical exposition of the interconnection and subordination of the principles of history there is in his work no trace.

Goerres' distribution of the epochs of history proceeds on the supposition that the life of the species corresponds to that of the individual, so that the one passes through the same stadia as the other. Its principle is thus a mere analogy, which is very vague even when the terms are the individual and a nation, and far more vague when they are the individual and the race. The

analogy is one which has been often used and as often abused, and which has been exhibited in all sorts of ways; but a more erroneous conception of it has seldom been formed than that which we find in the second of the lectures under consideration. The first stadium of the individual, according to Goerres, is that of his *natural existence*, the period of youth; the second is that of the exercise of his various indwelling powers of life, and involves his relations to the family, tribe, and nation; the third is that of the activity of the moral faculties; and the fourth that of the culture of the religious principles. And in like manner, he thinks, the first and lowest stadium of the development of the race is seen in the divisions and distinctions produced by physical conditions, such as climate, the geological character of a locality, and its geographical position; the second in ethnographical divisions, or the distribution of men into races, tribes, nations, each with its own mode of living, its own instincts and dispositions; the third in ethico-political life, as exemplified in civilised states ruled by codes of law; and the last in the religious or churchly life, which nations elaborate with more or less purity out of that portion of the divine Word which they have been privileged to receive.

Hegel remarks that spheres of life are here combined and confounded with stages of life; that only the first stadium of individual development, for example, is a stage, the three other so-called stadia being spheres; and that the parallelism attempted to be drawn between the history of the individual and of the race is, in consequence, illusory. But probably the remark is not so true in the form Hegel puts it as it at first sight appears to be. Goerres certainly supposed all his stadia to be stages, phases of human nature appearing one after another, because the powers or elements in which they originate manifest themselves in a fixed order of succession. That any thoughtful person should thus suppose the principles of human nature to be successively developed in separate and distinct groups is, indeed, exceedingly strange, but it has often happened; and even at present, a man like Littré, as we have seen, can regard a form of this very absurdity as an important scientific discovery of his own. A safer and more decisive objection than that Goerres

confounded stages and spheres, is that there are no such stages as those which he supposed, since the development both of the the individual and of humanity is a continuous development of all their powers and principles, and not of different classes of powers and principles, in distinct successive stadia.

The last lecture abounds even more than the others in capricious and fantastic views. It aims at giving an outline of the entire course of historic development. It begins by treating of eternity and the self-manifestation of God, and thence passes to the creation of the world by successive separations and combinations during the Mosaic days, which are the eras of this first period of time; next, it notices the genesis of evil in six acts, which occupy the second period; and then the stages of conflict between good and evil, Sethites and Cainites, from the Fall to the Flood, which ends the history of the old world. The history of the new world has three periods. The first begins in Noah's ark and ends with Greece and Rome. It has six eras, and these correspond to the six Mosaic days. The second period is the new Sabbath, or period of the second Adam. The third is the period of the conflict between the life and light He has brought into the world and the surrounding antagonistic darkness and death. This period also is represented as having epochs corresponding to the Mosaic days. Thus, from the spread of Christianity to the spread of Mohammedanism was evening and morning of the first day. It is in the third day that we are living. There can be no need to state a theory of this kind more minutely. And it would obviously be labour thrown away to criticise and disprove it. A subdivision of the periods of history according to the days of the Mosaic account of creation may be very ingenious; but, of course, it cannot possibly have any title to be considered a true scientific distribution of historical eras. A worse abuse there has scarcely been even of these days.

CHAPTER IX.

FREDERICK SCHLEGEL.[1]

I.

THE character of Frederick Schlegel (1772-1829) is an interesting and perplexing subject of study, which cannot be delineated by a few general phrases; and the same is true of his genius, which was full of strength and weakness, rich yet unripe, widely cultured, quick, susceptible, not incapable of penetrating deeply, but somehow never bringing anything to perfection, never performing more than a small part of what it promised. The correspondence of his college friend Schleiermacher, and his own contributions to the 'Athenæum,' show that from the commencement of his literary career there floated before his mind the conception of a philosophy of history.[2] It seems never quite to have left him, although it only attained anything like realisation in the course of lectures delivered by him at Vienna during the year before his death.

A long series of remarkable studies, on particular periods and departments of history, had by that time prepared and entitled

[1] The complete edition of Schlegel's works is in 15 vols., of which the 'Philosophy of Life' forms the 12th, and the 'Philosophy of History' the 13th volume. There is a review of the latter by Rosenkranz in 'Das Verdienst der Deutschen um die Philosophie der Geschichte.' The historical theory expounded by the Earl of Crawford in 'Progression by Antagonism' and 'Scepticism and the Church of England,' although an independent and original theory, contains almost all the more important principles to be found in Schlegel's 'Philosophy of History.' It is chargeable with few of the defects which I have indicated in Schlegel's doctrine.

[2] For most interesting details on this point see Dilthey—'Leben Schleiermachers,' p. 226-230 and 354-361.' Professor Dilthey's account of Schlegel in this work has been drawn largely from unpublished sources, and is an important contribution to the knowledge of his early life.

him to treat of it as a whole. At the outset of his literary career, his investigations into the history and poetry of the Greeks and Romans had been such as to have obtained the commendations of men like Heyne and Wolf, A. von Humboldt and Boeckh. He had subsequently applied himself to the study of Sanscrit and of Hindoo literature and philosophy, with a success sufficient to convince the scholars of Germany that the study would be eminently remunerative, and with an enthusiasm which kindled a love for it in some congenial spirits. He had afterwards published a course of lectures on modern history, the learning and ability of which were recognised even by those who dissented most decidedly from some of the views which they contained. He had next passed in review the great literary monuments of all ages, and judged them in relation not only to the general requirements of art, but to the state of society, religion, and morals, of thought and feeling, in the countries and epochs in which they appeared. A work on the philosophy of history was the natural conclusion of such a course of historical studies. It is impossible to accuse Schlegel of having neglected, as so many other historical theorists have done, that first and most indispensable condition of historical speculation—the acquisition of a reasonable amount of ordinary historical knowledge. He was, further, a man of strong speculative tendencies, whose historical investigations were always prompted by philosophical curiosity, and always speedily converted into themes for philosophical meditation. Each fragment of history with which his mind happened to be occupied suggested to him thoughts on humanity itself, and the problems which its destiny involves. Proof of this may be found abundantly in all the works I have mentioned. His speculative abilities were, perhaps, not commensurate with his speculative desires and ambition, but they were much greater than is ordinarily allotted to men. He had an amply-stored memory, a wide and varied experience of life, a vigorous imagination, a deep and productive understanding, and intuitive and poetical genius; was familiar with philosophical questions and theories; had passed through a time of almost unparalleled philosophical activity, shared in its tendencies, and even been, in many aspects, one of its chief representatives.

It is natural, therefore, that we should come to Schlegel's 'Philosophy of History' with large expectations; and it is characterised by a fulness of knowledge, and a completeness and skill of treatment, which so far respond to our expectations. The general impression left in most minds, however, is decidedly one of disappointment. Why, will become apparent through an examination of the work itself.

The course of lectures on the philosophy of history is closely connected with a course which Schlegel had delivered the previous year on what he called the philosophy of life. These two courses may, in fact, be regarded as the two divisions of a single work; they treat of the two sides of one subject. Philosophy, according to Schlegel, is the science of the inward life of man. It makes, he insists, but one presupposition—viz., the existence of the internal life; and its chief or central problem is to determine how unity and harmony may be conferred on that life, how the image of God, which it has lost, may be restored in it. To point out how this may be effected in the individual consciousness, is the task of pure philosophy—the philosophy of life, distinctively so called. To point out how the process has been so far actually carried on among the different peoples and in the various ages of the world, is the task of the philosophy of history.

That is how Schlegel starts. To me the start seems a stumble. The assurance that philosophy has only one presupposition, the existence of the internal life, is contradicted in the very act of being uttered. That philosophy is the science of the internal life is another presupposition made, and a far more questionable one than that internal life exists. I do not see that internal life, or what we are conscious of, need be pronounced a presupposition; but the fact of internal life, however designated, will be at once accepted. Can the definition of philosophy as the science of the internal life be reasonably accepted with the same readiness? Can it be accepted at all? Is it not mere arbitrary caprice to single out the internal life from other things, and make it the alone and adequate object of philosophy?

There is still another presupposition involved—viz., the "Fall," the loss of God's image from the soul. Now it is throwing no

doubt on the reality of that occurrence to deny that it can be legitimately presupposed by any science. If the philosophy of history be a science, it may conceivably show that there are facts which can only be satisfactorily explained through a "fall," or, in other words, facts which point to the conclusion that there was a "fall;" but to assume the doctrine of the Fall into its definition is utterly incompatible with any claim to its possession of a scientific character. No science can assume or presuppose explanations of its phenomena. While I cannot but state this objection, I should be sorry to magnify it, or to condemn his whole historical system because of it, as has unfortunately been frequently done. He seems to me to have already paid a most unreasonable price for his error. It has cost him, in fact, with many, his entire reputation as an historical philosopher. Gans, in his preface to the first edition of 'Hegel's Philosophy of History,' passed a severe censure on Schlegel's work mainly on that ground; and his one-sided and unjust judgment has been accepted as final and complete to a strange and most mischievous extent. His words are: "In Frederick von Schlegel's 'Philosophy of History' we find, if we seek, a fundamental thought which may be called philosophical. It is this, namely, that man was created free, and that two ways lay before him, of which he could choose either the one or the other—either that which led upwards, or that which led into the lower depths. Had he remained firm and faithful to the original will which proceeded from God, his freedom would have been that of the blessed spirits, as regards which it is altogether erroneous to conceive of the paradisiacal state as one of blissful idleness. But since man has unhappily chosen the second path, there is now a divine and natural will in him, and the problem for the life both of the individual and of the entire race is to change and convert the lower and earthly natural will ever more and more into the higher divine will. Thus this Philosophy of History really begins with the monstrous lamentation that there should be any history, and that the unhistorical condition of blessed spirits did not last. History is apostasy—an obscuration of pure and divine being—and instead of God being to be discovered in it, it is rather the negative of God which is therein mirrored. Whether the human race will

ultimately succeed in returning entirely and completely to God is on this view no more than a matter of expectation and of hope, which, after its prospects have been once more darkened through Protestantism, must, to Frederick von Schlegel, appear at least doubtful. In the delineations of the distinctive features of the characters and histories of the several nations, where this fundamental thought is placed a little in the background, an intellectual platitude shows itself, which seeks to compensate by smoothness of diction for frequent feebleness and cessation of thought."

It has seemed to me necessary to set before the eyes of the reader words which have had so much influence on the reputation of the work under consideration. The criticism contained in them is far from just. Gans ought to have stated much more clearly and explicitly what it was to which he objected—where Schlegel's fundamental thought was erroneous. Was it false to hold that man was created free? or that he had had two very different paths lying before him? or that he had chosen to follow a worse path than he might have done and often disobeyed God's will? Was any one of these assertions—or were all of them—equivalent to lamenting that there had been a history? That witticism of Herr Gans has been wonderfully effective, but the reasoning by which he reaches it is perhaps more amusing than itself. Certainly it pledged him to maintain that man had not been created free—had never had any path before him but one—and had never strayed or sinned. But if prepared to do so, he should have distinctly stated that these were the presuppositions involved in the fundamental idea which he would oppose to Schlegel's, in order that his readers might compare them and form their own opinion as to whether or not it were better entitled to be called philosophical. The reason, it will be observed, which I gave for considering it illegitimate and unscientific to begin the philosophy of history with an affirmation of the Fall, proves it equally illegitimate and unscientific to begin with its denial. It bears as heavily against Gans as against Schlegel. Of course, Schlegel did not lament that there should have been a history at all, but only that there should have been a history originated and pervaded by sin. He had

not got the length of admiring the Fall as a happy and heroic achievement, and of looking on evil in general as merely "good in another way we are not skilled in."

That history is represented by Schlegel only as a process of human apostasy, in which what is reflected is not God but His negative, is quite untrue. He heartily accepted Lessing's idea of a progressive providential education of the human race; fully expounded and enforced it in the seventh and eighth lectures of the 'Philosophy of Life;' and repeatedly returns to it in the 'Philosophy of History.' He does not deny the indefinite perfectibility of man, but only affirms that his corruptibility is as great as his perfectibility. He rejects the hypothesis that man was developed from an entirely animal condition, and that his history has been throughout a course of gradual progress without break or pause, without deviation or retrogression; but he admits that progress is the natural result of the faculties with which man has been endowed, and that it is clearly traceable as a general historical fact. He certainly tries to prove the existence of an original revelation to mankind, and to trace the course of its falsification by the admixture of various errors; but his main endeavour is, as he himself says, "to point out the progressive restoration in humanity of the effaced image of God, according to the gradation of grace in the various periods of the world, from the revelation given at the beginning, down to the middle revelation of redemption and love, and from that to the final consummation."

Schlegel begins by informing us that the philosophy of history is the spirit or idea of history, and that it must be educed from history itself; that what he intends is to give such an account of the chief transactions of the past and of their connections, and so to estimate their importance relatively to the collective progress of mankind, as may unfold in some degree the general plan of history as a whole; and that in carrying out his purpose he will keep his attention fixed on the main subject, the general outline of human development, instead of letting it be distracted or dissipated by a number of minute details, and be content not to attempt to explain every-

thing, or to supply whatever appears to be a gap in history. Unfortunately, for this admirable profession he soon substitutes quite another which cannot be reconciled with it. "In history," he says, "as in all science, and in life itself, the principal point on which everything turns, and the all-deciding problem, is, whether all things shall be deduced from God, and God Himself shall be considered the first, nature the second existence, although holding undoubtedly a very important place; or whether, inversely, the precedency should be given to nature, and, as in that case invariably happens, all things should be deduced from nature only, whereby the Deity, though not by express unambiguous words, yet indirectly and really is set aside, or at least remains unknown. This question cannot be settled by mere dialectical contention, which rarely attains its end. It is the will which here mostly decides, and leads the individual to choose, according to the nature and bias of his character, between two opposite paths, the one which he would follow in speculation and science, faith and life." Schlegel ought to have explained how the first and all-deciding problem of the philosophy of history could possibly be the deduction of things either from God or nature, if the philosophy of history were, as he had previously affirmed, simply the spirit or idea of history, and only discoverable in history itself; how a beginning could be made from the facts of history and also from either a religious or an ontological principle; how induction could be first, if deduction were before it. He has made no effort to do so; and if he had, he would have failed, for the two views are irreconcilable,—if the one be true, the other must be false.

In the first two lectures Schegel treats of the relation of the earth to man, of the primitive condition of humanity, and of the division of mankind into races or classes, which afterwards gave rise to a plurality of nations. He rejects the notion that man was developed out of the ape, and maintains that he was constituted the lord and ruler of the earth by having imparted to him a divine principle, the internal word of God, which is the light of the higher consciousness, the root of thought and speech, the bond which unites and the power which directs all the distinctive excellences of human nature. He holds the

first estate of man to have been one of innocence and high endowments, and the savage state one of degeneracy and degradation—consequently not the first but the second phase in human history. He represents the origin of discord as the first historical fact, and the antagonism of Cainites and Sethites as the axis on which all primitive history turned, being far more a struggle of principles than of races, and, in reality, a contest between religion and impiety, conducted on the mighty scale of the primitive world. He argues for the credibility of the traditions which assign to the first men gigantic statures, enormous longevity, and great mental powers for good and evil. His attempt to rest this inference on the discoveries of the physical sciences is the reverse of successful. The concluding pages of his second lecture closely resemble certain pages in Hegel's 'Philosophy of History,' and the position they advocate will be examined in connection with Hegel. It is, that as only a small number of individuals, so only a small number of nations, can be properly called historical,—that, indeed, fifteen only have a right to be so designated, and that these form a chain or stream from the south-east of Asia to the northern and western extremities of Europe, of considerable breadth in itself, although not of great extent in proportion to the two continents which it passes through.

The four following lectures treat of the constitution of the Chinese empire and the character of the Chinese mind—the institutions, doctrines, mental and moral culture of the Hindoos—the science and religion of the Egyptians—and the theocratic government and providential mission of the Hebrews. Egypt is very briefly dealt with, Champollion being the chief authority relied on; China with considerable minuteness, under the guidance of Abel Remusat, and especially of Dr Windischmann; India still more minutely, on the data supplied by Colebrooke, August William von Schlegel, &c.; while as to Israel's place in history, Molitor's 'Philosophy of Tradition' is largely used. Comparing these four nations, Schlegel professes to find that each is characterised by the predominance of one of those four faculties which he holds to be primary in the soul and spirit of man, and to have been disunited and arrayed against each other

through the sin that destroyed the primitive harmony and perfection of human nature. The Chinese mind, it seems to him, is distinguished by the prevalence of *reason*—the faculty of analysis and arrangement, but in itself devoid of inventive or productive power, and apt to decline into egotism, formalism, and atheism; the Hindoo mind by the prevalence of *imagination*—the inventive faculty in art, poetry, and even science, but prone to run into sensuality and mysticism; the Egyptian mind by the prevalence of *understanding*—the faculty of apprehension or intuition, which penetrates into the inward essence and scientific significance of things, yet which, when separated from a pure and steadfast heart, cannot preserve from dark delusions and vile practices; and the Hebrew mind by the prevalence of the *will*—a will that sought its God with sincerity, earnestness, and ardour, and followed His guidance with faith, resignation, and courage. It will be observed that there are here two things,—a psychological theory and an historical generalisation, and that although they are connected by Schlegel they may be separated. I believe that they ought to be separated. The psychological theory—that reason, imagination, understanding, and will, defined as above, are the four primary faculties of mind—will be rejected by every person who has paid any attention to mental science. The historical generalisation—that the Chinese, Hindoos, Egyptians, and Hebrews were distinguished from each other by the peculiarities of character mentioned—probably contains a considerable amount of truth.

Further, the external word, according to Schlegel, was divided and diversified among these nations not less than the internal word. He repeatedly informs us, indeed, that it was his main purpose, so far as the first period of universal history was concerned, to prove the existence of a primitive revelation of divine truth which preceded and underlies the manifold fictions of heathenism. In this I cannot find that, even with the help of his friend Dr Windischmann, and Dr Molitor, he has in the least degree succeeded; but the belief was, of course, a very natural one in a Roman Catholic like Schlegel, and his acceptance of it on insufficient grounds was much more excusable than it would be in any other than a Roman Catholic. It is remarkable, how-

ever, that there are Protestant authors—and not a few of them—who expose with severity the absurdity of Roman Catholics supposing that truths or practices could be handed down from the comparatively recent time of the first Christian teachers, through ages comparatively enlightened, and over a few countries which have always been in comparatively close intercourse with each other, yet who themselves believe in primeval traditions which must have endured four times as long, and have traversed the whole earth and been clung to through every vicissitude of fortune by all peoples and tribes, and see in these traditions an explanation of almost every fact of heathen life. These men surely strain out a gnat and swallow a camel. The best researches into the development of religion do not confirm the opinion that the knowledge of the one true God and of other spiritual truths has been diffused through the world by tradition, but show that in all the more civilised heathen nations unity is not the starting-point, but the goal of religious thought, while in the more barbarous nations it is rarely found at all. In the Vedic period of Indian history naturalism came first, anthropomorphism next, and last of all, through the long labours of reflection, the notion of one Being was reached; but the notion was purely a product of speculation, and essentially pantheistic. It was not otherwise in Greece, where the popular religion began with naturalism and ended with anthropomorphism, never reaching the knowledge of the one God; for although the philosophers speculating on the world and man approximated to it, even Plato and Aristotle, like the Aryan sages, never got farther than a refined form of the pantheistic reduction of multiplicity to unity.

Schlegel passes from the four nations mentioned to the Persians, who must, he thinks, be classed along with them, so far as regards religion and sacred tradition, and also from their character and geographical position, yet who formed the transition from the first to the second epoch of the world, commencing the course of universal conquest, afterwards followed by the Greeks, and carried farthest by the Romans, and thus heading the series of nations to whom a really mighty historical influence was assigned. He touches briefly on the strong deep sense of nature, the old ancestral faith, and the pure manners of

the ancient Persians, the spirit of ambition and martial enthusiasm which grew up among them, the character of the new monarchy founded by Cyrus, the institute of the Magi, the privileges of the nobility, the system of moral and military education, the rapid conquests of the empire, and its decline and fall through the operation of pride and luxury (L. vii.) He then delineates, on the one hand, the immense wealth and variety of life and intellect among the Greeks, as displayed in their widely-dispersed settlements and colonies, and their manifold forms of government and culture, and the distinctive features of their policy, religion, art, science, and philosophy (viii.); and, on the other hand, the strong and harsh character of the Romans, their early simplicity, their serious piety, their perspicacious practical sense and political insight, their perseverance and energy in conquest, the sanguinary nature of their civil wars, the merits of their poetry, history, and jurisprudence—this last being superior to anything the world had previously seen, yet faulty because overlooking the distinction between strict or absolute law and the law of equity, or law modified by circumstances—and the extension, gradual dissolution, monstrous and irremediable corruption, and overthrow of the empire (ix.) He does not attempt to connect these three nations by a general formula, at least by none more definite than that they all displayed great energy and sought universal empire. No dogmatic aim—no foregone conclusion—is prominent in his treatment of them; which is what cannot be said, perhaps, of any other division of his work.

The tenth lecture—the first of the second volume—brings us to the central crisis of history,—the rise of Christianity. The way in which Schlegel distributes and characterises the great epochs of human development is almost incredibly superficial and fanciful. The determining principle he holds to be in each epoch the divine impulse imparting new life. "The word of divine truth originally communicated to man, and which the sacred traditions of all nations attest in so many and such various ways, forms the guiding thread of historical research and judgment during the first stage of the progress of society. But in the second stage of historical development, which must be fixed in that full noonday of refinement, when victorious power

shines forth so conspicuously in the ascendancy obtained by nations, to whom universal pre-eminence was accorded, the right notion of this power, or the question how far it was just or hurtful in its application, godly or ungodly, or at least of a mixed nature, must constitute the true standard of historical inquiry. And in the third or last stage of this progress, which occurs in the modern period of the world, the pure truths of Christianity as they influence science and life itself, can alone furnish the right clue of investigation, and can alone afford any indication as to the ulterior advances of society in future ages. Thus the *Word*, the *Power*, and the *Light*, form the threefold divine principle, or the moral classification of historical phenomena." A formula like that is, of course, beneath all serious criticism; and we may pass on, comforting ourselves with the reflection that a more specious and definite one would almost certainly have done greater harm.

In the first five lectures of his second volume, Schlegel describes the social and political condition of the world when Christianity appeared, the decline of the Roman power, the invasions of the Germans, the spread of the Christian religion, the rise, conquests, and character of Mohammedanism, the new organisation of the European West under the influence of the Church, the establishment of the German empire, the struggles of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, the Crusades, Romantic poetry and art, Scholastic science and jurisprudence, and the awakening of the spirit of unrest and independence which led to the Reformation (x.-xiv.) The influence of his Roman Catholic convictions becomes very visible in these lectures. To glorify the medieval Church, the Papal system, he considerably exaggerates its real merits, and entirely overlooks both the evil which it produced and the good which was accomplished in spite of it. He is silent as to the condition of the immense mass of the people, the oppressed and tormented serfs, and almost silent as to the abounding violence and brutality of the nobility. He paints the clergy, notwithstanding the prevalence of corruption, avarice, ambition, and falsehood among them, only in rosy tints, forgetful of the very different colours which had been employed by those who had been eyewitnesses of their conduct. He actually argues

that the radical vice of the middle ages was rationalism, or, as he calls it, the spirit of the absolute. He thinks the Scholastic philosophy was essentially an expression of that spirit; and that, although men like Thomas Aquinas contrived to make it as little dangerous as possible, it would have been better had it never been, had reason never learned to question faith. He believes the earlier period of the middle age to have been on the whole a satisfactory and beautiful phase of existence, until individualism or free inquiry, which is the inspiration of Antichrist, made its appearance. He represents, in fact, the principle of human progress as the principle of human degeneracy.

While from a Roman Catholic point of view medieval history looks far more beautiful than it really was, modern history is seen in the most unfavourable light, the national life of all peoples which have felt powerfully the impulse given by the Reformation necessarily appearing to be of an essentially diseased and anti-Christian character. It was from that point of view, however, that Schlegel theorised on history. To vindicate Roman Catholicism, to exhibit it as the source of all true national prosperity and historical progress, was one of his most obvious and cherished aims. I am far from imputing that to him as a fault. A Roman Catholic has, of course, every right to try to show that history is on his side; it is even his duty to do so, and a duty, I may add, which Protestants ought to rejoice to see fulfilled, since, if Protestantism be more in harmony with the teaching of history than Roman Catholicism, the study of history must tend to enlarge and liberalise the Roman Catholic mind, and to prepare it for the acceptance of Protestant principles. The mere fact that Schlegel's philosophy of history is an attempt to explain the movement of humanity by the creed of Catholicism, invests it with a peculiar interest and value. It is the distinguishing characteristic of his work to have applied the Roman Catholic view of human life to the interpretation of history, as a whole, in a closer and more comprehensive way than any one had done before him; and it would be unjust to deny this to be a merit. None the less are we free to hold that a considerable part of the service thus rendered to historical philosophy lies in the indirect and involuntary proof which it affords of the inability of Roman

Catholicism to supply the principles of an adequate historical theory. To Schlegel, as to every other author who has attempted to theorise on the same presuppositions, history, since the Reformation, is not a source of instruction but of perplexity. It is not explained, but merely pronounced an enigma which must be referred to "the wonderful secret of the divine decrees in the conduct of mankind." It is not brought within the sphere of philosophy, but confessed to lie beyond it.

In the lectures devoted to the Reformation, the Religious wars, Illuminism, and the French Revolution (xv.-xvii.), Schlegel, although obviously himself even more liberal than a Roman Catholic can consistently be, is forced by the narrowness and one-sidedness of the theory on which he proceeds to shut his eyes to many facts, and to pervert and misjudge others. He prefaces them by some general observations on the philosophy of history. This philosophy, he tell us, is not to be found in historical particulars but in the principles of social science, and these principles are no mere organic laws of nature but manifestations of free-will, the faculty of moral determination between good and evil, to which natural laws form only a physical basis, or rather, simply a disposition of which the direction depends on the use man makes of his freedom. It is only when the higher principle of free-will has been debased and destroyed that the laws of nature, the laws of necessity, prevail, and that the progress and symptoms of organic disease can be traced by historical science in bodies politic with almost as much precision as by medical science in the bodies of individuals. Along with free-will there is another divine principle to be recognised in the progress of nations,—viz., the guidance of an all loving and all-ruling Providence—the effective, historical, redemptive power of God,—which restores to the individual and the race their lost freedom, and with it the effectual power of good. Without this idea of an all-ruling Providence, of the redeeming power of God, history would be a labyrinth without clue or issue—a mighty tragedy without proper beginning or ending—a confused pile of ages heaped on ages. Side by side with free-will and Providence is a third principle, the permitted power of evil, the deepest and most complicated enigma of the world, which can find its solu-

tion only in the divinely-ordained trial of the faculty of freedom. Only he who has a clear and deep insight into the nature and working of the mystery of evil can penetrate to any great depth below the surface of historical events. These three mighty principles,—the hidden ways of a Providence delivering and emancipating the human race—the free-will of man destined to a decisive choice in the struggle of life—and the power permitted by God to the principle of evil,—constitute the threefold law of the historical world. They cannot be deduced as absolutely necessary, like the laws of nature or of reason, but must be drawn out of the multitude of historical facts, and spring up, as it were, spontaneously from bare observation.

Having laid down these principles, he proceeds to pass judgment on the Reformation. He acknowledges the greatness of Luther—admits that a reformation was in the fifteenth century urgently needed—and characterises that which was actually accomplished as a mighty and momentous revolution, which has since, down even to the present day, mainly determined the movement of modern times and the character of modern science. But, at the same time, he pronounces the actual Reformation to have been a mere human, unsanctioned enterprise—the cause of a vast, protracted, incurable division among mankind,—not what it should have been, a *divine* Reformation, extensive, deep, and effectual, which would have renovated and revived the Church without severing itself from the sacred centre of Christian tradition or causing discord in society. Now I greatly object to the Reformation being declared in an easy, offhand, sweeping way a work of man as opposed to a work of God, since my religious lights, like Schlegel's own, lead me to believe a work of man as opposed to a work of God to be a work of Satan. As whatever is good has its source in God, so whatever is evil has its source in Satan. Good is an effect of which God is in all cases the first cause; evil is an effect of which Satan is in all cases the first cause. Between visible good or evil events, however, and their first causes, a secondary cause, the human will, always intervenes; that is to say, in history God is the author of all good, Satan of all evil, through the will of man. We may therefore satisfy ourselves in any given circumstances

as to the agency or absence of God or Satan by a legitimate process of inference from an investigation of the moral character of the facts involved, and have no right to attribute things to either by mere guessing and dogmatism—no right to make assertions about the first cause of facts without an honest and patient examination of their secondary causes and consequences, through a knowledge of the nature of which alone can their true first cause be ascertained. Before any man can be justified in connecting either the name of God or Satan with an extensive movement like the Reformation, he ought to have analysed it into its elements, to have carefully ascertained and studied its secondary causes and results, and to have diligently separated the good from the evil in it,—and after that has been done, he ought to go no farther than to refer the good to God and the evil to Satan. Schlegel has certainly not proceeded thus; on the contrary, he has pronounced the Reformation a work of man as opposed to a work of God without any proof of its having been wholly or even predominantly evil. Then, as to the reformation which he holds should have been instead of the actual one, I have only to remark, that it would have been not merely a work of God, but a miraculous work. The Pope and other members of the hierarchy resolutely refused to turn from their evil ways —resolutely resisted the most urgently needed reforms—resolutely disobeyed, in a word, God speaking to them through men, —and as He did not choose to speak to them through miracles, and make them honest, enlightened, and pious men in spite of themselves, the Reformation had of necessity to take place in defiance of them, and amidst a vast amount of discord. Perhaps a reformation by miracle and rose-water might have been preferable, and undoubtedly would have been more pleasant; but a miracle was not wrought, and rose-water alone was clearly insufficient.

In tracing the development and spread of Protestantism in the different countries of Europe, Schlegel condemns all persecution, and maintains that where Protestantism was outwardly suppressed, its most essential part—the spirit of destructive negation and revolutionary innovation—was left to rage inwardly; and that this spirit instilled into the moral system of a Catholic

nation is far more fatal to its welfare, and to that of its neighbours, than an established Protestant constitution. He specifies these as the three great historical results of Protestantism: in Germany, the religious peace ratified by the treaty of Westphalia; in England, the constitution of 1688, and the material system of the balance of power; and in France, the Aufklärung issuing in the Revolution. The first of these consequences he estimates very justly; the latter two very imperfectly.

The last lecture is not, perhaps, of any great intrinsic value, but it is of great interest. It shows that the author had not found in the Roman Catholic Church the satisfaction which he had sought in it. It shows that he felt that his philosophy of history was far from a perfect theory; that, in particular, more than three centuries of time were a mystery and perplexity to it. It is the expression of a longing for a solution of the enigma, for a divine Reformation before which the human Reformation will sink and disappear, for a divine enlightenment in presence of which the delusive glare of all systems of philosophical rationalism will be extinguished, for the destruction of the spirit of the absolute, and for the formation, establishment, and triumph of Christian government and Christian science. It is with the religious hope that all this will speedily be realised that Schlegel closes his philosophy of history; but as the spirit of the absolute or cause of evil really means with him the spirit of rational freedom, and the good cause which he wishes to triumph in science and life is unqualified and unquestioning submission to external authority, I can discover no satisfactory grounds for his hope.

CHAPTER X.

KRAUSE.

Charles Christian Frederick Krause (1781-1832) has been little heard of in this country. He studied philosophy at Jena under Fichte and Schelling, and the influence of both, but especially of the latter, may be distinctly traced in his works. He cannot, however, be described with any propriety as a follower of Schelling, or indeed as a follower of any one; he pursued a path of his own: after failing to find satisfaction for his mind and heart in the doctrines of his teachers or in older systems, he wrought out with quiet independence and the most praiseworthy perseverance a philosophy which is as much entitled to be regarded as original as that of Fichte or Schelling or Hegel. In the truth and value of that philosophy he had the most profound and fervent faith, and he devoted himself to its elaboration and diffusion with indefatigable zeal. It was long before his labours produced any visible results. His numerous works on philosophy attracted little attention, and those which he wrote on freemasonry involved him in persecution. He had all his life to contend with poverty and adversity. He never rose above the rank of *privat-docent*. This want of popular success was not, perhaps, altogether unnatural. He was the contemporary of Schelling and Hegel, and a voice like his had little chance of being listened to, so long as the ears of men were bewitched by their magnificent professions and promises. These two mighty sorcerers drew almost the whole philosophical world in wonderment after them; and

> "Scholars, in their lore too apt,
> Suffering a lofty madness from the love
> Of their new thought, a race of Titans, plunged

Into the sea of Nature, and with rash
Intrusion rushed into the innermost shrine,
Where men have kept their holiest, preaching dreams
Like hierophants before the gaping mob."

The devout speculations of Krause were not of a character to commend themselves to the minds of men in this state of excitement. The spell had to be broken, the delirium required to subside, before his claims could receive a fair examination. Then he considerably diminished what chance he had of attracting attention to himself, or rather to what was dearer to him than his own self, his doctrine, by the adoption of a most perplexing and repulsive terminology. He conceived the idea of reforming the German language as well as German philosophy, of purifying it from all foreign elements, of writing an absolutely pure German. At the same time, far from deeming it necessary to avoid as much as possible the use of technical terms, he employed them more lavishly than those who drew most freely on Latin and Greek. The result was a German so pure that the best-educated Germans have declared that they could no more understand it than Arabic or Sanscrit.[1] Of course, in that they exaggerate a little, or even not a little, but still they only exaggerate; and in many cases Krause's pure

[1] Here is what Professor Zeller says: "Wer gelesen sein will, der schreibe so, dass man ihn versteht; es heisst dem Leser gar zu viel zumuthen, wenn man von ihm verlangt, er solle erst eine neue Sprache erlernen, um sich durch ein paar Bücher durchzuarbeiten, von denen er denn doch nicht zum voraus wissen kann, ob in der harten und stachligen Schale ein Kern liegt, wegen dessen es sich verlohnt, sie zu öffnen. Jede Wissenschaft braucht ja ihre Terminologie, und wer neue Begriffe entdeckt, der ist auch genöthigt und berechtigt, bestimmte Bezeichnungen dafür zu schaffen. Aber alles hat sein Mass. Wenn ein Schriftsteller gar nie von den Steltzen seiner Terminologie herabsteigt, wenn er aus lauter Purismus ein Deutsch schreibt, welches dem Deutschen so unverständlich ist, als ob es Sanskrit wäre; wenn man bei ihm auf jedem Schritte, und oft zu Dutzenden in einer Periode Ausdrücken begegnet, wie Satzheit, Ursatzheit und Vereinsatzheit, Richtheit, Fassheit und Erkennheit, Seinheitureinheit und Seinheitvereinheit, Verhaltseinheit und Gehaltseinheit, wenn man nicht hoffen kann, seine Meinung zu fassen, ehe man sich den Unterschied von Urweseninnesein, Selbweseninnesein, Ganzwesininnesein und Vereinselbganzweseninnesein oder Schauvereinfühlen gemerkt, die Bedeutung von Orwesen, Antwesen, Mälwesen und Omwesen, Wesen-als-Urwesen und Geist-verein-Leibwesen, von Or-om-Wesenlebverhaltheit und Orend-eigen-Wesenahmlebheit, das Verhältniss von 'Wesens Or-om-Lebselbstschauen' zu seinem Ur-und Ewig-Selbstschauen sich klar gemacht hat, so ist es am Ende begreiflich, das nicht jeder sich entschliesst, sich durch solche Hieroglyphen durchzuarbeiten."

German is indescribably hideous. Again and again, when stuck fast in a sentence like this (and there are sometimes three or four quite as bad on a single page)—"Das Wesenleben ist Or-, Ant-, Mäl-, Om-Wesen-leben, es ist in sich der Eine Wesenleben-Gliedbau; es enthält in sich Urwesen-Wesenleben, Geistwesen-Wesenleben, Leibwesen-Wesenleben, Geistwesen-verein-Leibwesen-Wesenleben und darin Menscheit-Wesenleben, jedes dieser Glieder für sich und alle im Verein mit allen,—also das Wesen-Vereinleben, und den Wesenlebenverein, den Wesenleben-Bund (nach der Grundwesenheit der Gesellheit oder Selbheit"),—I have felt as if my pursuit of philosophy had made of me if not a martyr at least a victim, while I have reflected with thankfulness that the English language has never been so tormented even by a philosopher. What made Krause's procedure all the worse was, that he was quite capable of writing admirably, and that, in spite of his purism, he sometimes did so. No one can read his 'Urbild der Menscheit,' for example, without finding in it the richest æsthetic as well as moral enjoyment.

The first to come thoroughly under the influence of Krause were a few of his students at Göttingen, and his fame has been greatly due to their zealous propagandism. One of the most enthusiastic among them was Henry Ahrens, now Professor of Philosophy and Political Science at Leipzig, but formerly Professor of Philosophy and the Law of Nature in the University of Brussels, after having been a student and *privat-docent* at Göttingen. He introduced the doctrine of his master into Belgium, where it still flourishes. A course of philosophy (1836-38) which he delivered in Paris under the auspices of the French Government, drew to it the attention of philosophically-minded men in France, and there it gained the assent of M. Bouchittée, Duprat, &c. His 'Cours de Droit Naturel,' a work which has gone through more than twenty editions or translations, has made it favourably known to the jurists of all lands. Its chief advocate in Belgium at present is M. Tiberghien, who has done much, both as professor and author, to expound and diffuse its principles. Baron von Leonhardi, formerly professor at Heidelberg, and now at Prague, is generally regarded as the head of the school in

Germany. Along with Ahrens, Professors Roeder and Schliephake, both of Heidelberg, are its chief representatives among German jurists. H. S. Lindemann has published very serviceable expositions of Krause's 'Theory of Science,' of his 'Anthropology,' and his 'Logic.' Froebel, the celebrated educationalist, the founder of the Kindergärten, was only less influenced by Krause than by Pestalozzi. The congresses for the advancement of philosophy which have been held in Germany since 1868, show that Krauseanism is there strong and full of faith and vigour. It certainly shows no signs of dying, and has in all probability a long and honourable future before it, not only as a doctrine in the schools, but as a power in society. It is, perhaps, strange that it should have been able to take root and grow in Spain. It was transplanted thither by Julio Sans del Rio, who learned to appreciate it during a stay of considerable length at Heidelberg, and afterwards taught it for about twenty years in the University of Madrid, until he was in 1868, through the influence of the Pope and the priests, dismissed from his office in the meanest and most lawless manner, for having translated into Spanish Krause's 'Urbild der Menscheit.' Neither Del Rio, nor the government which persecuted him, had much longer to live; but the former had done honest, earnest work, and he left behind him many whom he had imbued with his own admiration for Krause, including several who had themselves become teachers in the universities of Madrid and Seville. Sad and chaotic as existence at present is in unhappy Spain, we shall hope yet to see appear, when the dark waters which have risen so high have again subsided, the bread he cast upon them. I am not aware that in Great Britain Krause has been studied by any one except Professor Lorimer of Edinburgh, who, in the 'Institutes of Law,' shows a sympathetic appreciation of the merits, as well as insight into the defects, of his juristical philosophy.

Krause left his system almost completely evolved and organised; a whole which he had repeatedly delineated and carefully elaborated in its parts and members; the beginning and end, the divisions and subdivisions, the principles, method, plan, and doctrines of which were all settled with a rare degree of precision.

Like the systems of Fichte, and Schelling, and Hegel, it is a vast monistic theory, centring in a single truth, to which everything may be referred, and from which everything may be educed. That truth is the one and absolute Being which comprehends all being, the essence (*Wesen*) which is the substance of all existences, God, in whom, through whom, and to whom, are all things. The knowledge of God is, according to Krause, the true and living root of all knowledge; theology the fundamental science. Nay, the sole task of science is reduced by him to the apprehending of God in Himself, and to tracing how He manifests and mirrors Himself in the world, reason, and humanity. Philosophy, as universal science, ought thus to be a delineation of the organism of the divine life. In common with his contemporaries Jacobi and Baader, Krause denied that the existence of God could be, properly speaking, proved, being necessary and immediately certain, and, in fact, itself the presupposition of all proof. At the same time, he admitted that the so-called proofs were most valuable in awakening the mind to a consciousness of what is the light of all our seeing, the condition of all our knowing; and so far from beginning at once, like Schelling and Hegel, with the positing of the absolute and objective first principle, he insisted that philosophy was bound to start with what is subjectively certain, self-consciousness, and thence methodically to rise by a process of analysis, which he has minutely described, to the recognition of the highest truth; for only when this process was completed, and the idea of God was, in consequence, clearly and faithfully apprehended, could, he held, the mind hope to deduce from that idea the universe of science it included. It is only after reason has ascended to God by a subjective and analytic method, that it can descend from Him in an objective and synthetic course, comprehending and exhibiting the whole organism of existence. What was most distinctive in his own mode of apprehending the absolute Being and Cause, was the earnestness with which he strove to mediate between Pantheism and Theism, and to combine what he regarded as the truth in both into a completer conception, into Pan-en-theism. He could not think of the divine Being as one amongst a multitude of beings, as simply an immeasurably greater Being than all others;

but held that He must be the one Being as comprehending all being, as the essence of all that is, the life of all that lives; and on the other hand, he maintained, with the utmost explicitness, that God is a free, intelligent, loving, and righteous personality, and endeavoured to show that finite existences had even a relative life of their own, comprehended within the divine life, issuing from it, and bearing its likeness or image. How history depends on the divine life, and finds therein its law and explanation, Krause has attempted to describe in his 'Reine, *i.e.*, allgemeine Lebenlehre und Philosophie der Geschichte zu Begründung der Lebenkunstwissenschaft'—a work of which I now proceed to give a brief account.

The introduction is devoted to elucidate what is meant by history, philosophy, and philosophy of history, and to indicate what intellectual and spiritual advantages the philosophy of history should confer. The subject of history is declared to be the development of life, or, more precisely, of the one divine life, since all the life which reveals itself in nature, reason, or humanity, is included in that life—the universal life. History itself is consequently infinite,—the infinite work of God. The knowledge or science of it, however, is confined within narrow limits, since it comprehends merely so much of the divine life as manifests itself to our finite minds in the life within and around us. Philosophy is declared to consist of non-sensuous, and especially of supra-sensuous, knowledge; and such knowledge, we are told, every man who reflects on the subject will find that he possesses. The two conceptions of philosophy and history seem at first glance, according to Krause, to exclude each other; but they may be combined and harmonised by defining the philosophy of history as the knowledge of life and its evolution, regarded both purely in itself or according to the idea and in relation to empirically realised life or pure history. It is not to be understood as a knowledge of the series or aggregate of events which have happened, but as a knowledge of the spiritual and eternal nature of life, and of its laws of evolution, with the application of that knowledge to explain and estimate the actual course of history. Hence it must be either *a pure* or *an applied* philosophy of history. The pure philosophy of history is a purely phil-

osophical science. It may at times be illustrated from actual history; but for it to seek therein the proofs of its conclusions, is as illegitimate as it would be for a geometer to found the demonstrations of his theorems on the individual peculiarities of his squares, triangles, &c. It consists entirely in a knowledge of ideas—the idea of nature as a living whole, of spirit as the one living reason, of humanity as the most intimate union of spirit and nature, and of God as the infinitely absolute and absolutely infinite being. The applied philosophy of history receives the ideal truth in which the pure philosophy of history consists, and measures and judges by it the actual course of human events, showing how and to what extent it has been realised in positive facts, in occurrences perceivable by the senses. These views seem to me quite erroneous. The statement of them, however, has the merit of preparing us for what follows. Long before we have read through the introduction we know that the philosophy of history into which we are to be initiated presupposes a knowledge of almost everything except one, which, strangely enough, happens to be history itself.

Krause divides the rest of his work into two parts, in the first of which he undertakes to lay the scientific foundation of the philosophy of history, and in the second to give an outline of that philosophy so far as it is limited to humanity. I must not attempt to give more than the briefest summary of the first part, for it is itself a summary of almost all that is most distinctive and important in the Krausean system. Its perusal may be heartily recommended to those who wish to get at the kernel of Krause's teaching with the least possible expenditure of time and trouble. It contains an exposition of the doctrines which he thinks a philosophy of history must presuppose, and these are the chief doctrines both of metaphysics (*Grundwissenschaft*) and of the special philosophical sciences. The philosophy of history seemed to Krause to be the completion and conclusion of philosophy, and to imply the results of all other departments of philosophy. God, the world and its relation to God, and life, are the metaphysical themes which he discusses,—the two first briefly, the last at considerable length. He begins with God, because he holds all knowledge to be in its ultimate nature

knowledge of God, and the divine attributes to be the supreme categories of thought and the fundamental principles of existence. In the primary categories of totality, selfness, and their harmonious reunion (*Ganzheit*, *Selbheit*, and *Ganz-verein-selbheit*), he finds the essential elements, and in the secondary categories of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, which correspond to them, the formal principles of all that is, whether infinite or finite. He represents God as an infinite and absolute personality, as existing alone for Himself and for Himself alone, yet as so present in all beings and with all beings so present in Him, that He is not merely the cause of the world, but its immanent and active ground or essence. He conceives of the world as neither identical with God nor separate from Him, but as His finite expression and image. He endeavours to prove that life is founded in the essential attributes of the divine nature,—that it involves all these attributes, and therefore is even in God an organic whole,—that the divine life is an infinite and universal life, inclusive of the life of nature, the life of spirit, and the life of humanity, all which lives are organisms, yet organically related to one another,—that the life of God is a realisation of His essence, which is the good, while man has his end in the Alone Good,—that God acts with an eternal and unconditioned freedom, man with a limited and conditioned freedom, dependent on the absolute freedom of God, and in some measure on the freedom of others,—that evil has its source in the finite will, the want of liberty or abuse of liberty, and while not a mere negation is real only as a relation,—that so far as the infinite enters into the constitution of his finite nature man resists and rejects evil, and that the divine Being must necessarily and incessantly oppose and overcome it, and must finally deliver all creatures from it and completely destroy it,—that the development of individual lives passes through an endless number of finite cycles or periods in such a way that the ideal is realised in an infinite variety of forms instead of being for ever approached yet never reached,—that each of these periods comprehends a determinate series of ages which are not only separated in time but distinct in idea,—and that life is an organic process which tends as a whole and in every part to the honour and glory of God.

He next expounds, so far as seems to him necessary for the creation of a philosophy of history, the fundamental truths of the speculative sciences of nature, spirit, and humanity. He represents both nature and spirit as existing in God and bearing His image, each representing chiefly, although not exclusively, a different phase or attribute of His being. He decidedly rejects all atomistic and mechanical explanations of the world; maintains that it is a living organism pervaded by a peculiar kind of thought and will; and insists strongly, while granting to it a real value of its own—a value as an end and not as a mere mean—on its harmony with spirit, on their intimate and manifold connection and correspondence. He conceives of spirit as the counterpart of nature, as a whole which comprehends countless spirits and societies of spirits, as the realm of spirits. Nature and spirit he deems to be combined in a low form in the brutes; but he regards humanity as the closest and completest manifestation of their union in God. In man the highest individual spirits are connected with the most perfectly organised bodies. He is by his body the harmonious representation, type, and crown of the entire organisation and life of nature, and by his mind of the entire organisation and life of spirit; he is thus the most complete synthesis of the universe, as well as the truest image of God. He describes humanity as filling with its life all space and time,—as composed of an infinity of individual souls, which can neither be increased nor diminished in number, and each of which must reach its rational destination,—as perfectly realising at each moment its nature, although only in the way appropriate to the moment,—as one vast society, of which the whole humanity on earth is but a member, which lives at present in unconscious connection with higher societies. Each individual is called to realise in his own fashion the whole idea of man,—each is an end in himself,—all are essentially equal. The individual, however, can only become his true self, and fully attain to what he is called, through association and intercourse with his fellows. And, on the other hand, the whole society of mankind is to be viewed as one vast individual man, and each smaller society as a lesser individual. The end of these societies is, as collective moral persons, to develop and cultivate all the elements of hu-

man nature, and to realise all the aims of human life in an orderly and harmonious manner. The humanity of the universe, and, of course, the humanity of the earth, must become increasingly organised and increasingly conscious of their social unity. All the nations of the earth will ultimately be drawn closely together by association and confederation. Our author next proceeds to dissect and describe the internal organism of society. Society is composed of societies, an association of associations. There are two chief kinds of association—those the ends of which are general, and those the ends of which are special; and as the latter kind admits of a twofold division, there may be said to be three series of associations. The family, the community of friends, the local group, the nation, and the race itself, are associations of the former order, seeing that their end is nothing less than assistance to the individual in realising the purpose of his being as a whole. They are so many spheres of increasing generality and comprehensiveness, the members of which belong to them, as it were, through all the faculties of their being, and do not co-operate with one another merely for some definite special end, but for all the greater ends of life. There is another class of associations: those which exist expressly for the accomplishment of certain works incumbent on humanity, such as education, science, art. And there is, or ought to be, a third class of associations corresponding to all the fundamental phases of human life, all the distinct ends of human nature, justice, morality, beauty, and religion. These three series of associations are by no means merely juxtaposited in the world, or it would be a world of inextricable confusion; but the associations of the first series are not only connected with one another as successive stages in the evolution of collective humanity, but they so include those of the other series, and all are so unified and co-ordinated through their relationship to man and the ultimate aim of humanity, that the harmonious development of social life is secured. Krause concludes this part of his work by an exposition of his views on the two great associations intended respectively to realise justice and religion—the State and the Church (*Rechtbund* and *Gottinnigkeitbund*).

The title of the second part is "The philosophical science of

the development of life in time, or the general philosophy of history." This part is also divided into two sections. The first is simply a further elaboration of the doctrine of life. Proceeding upon what had been already laid down on that subject, it proposes to render more explicit and definite the general idea of life, the organic nature of its entire development in all beings, and its differentiation into a succession of epochs and ages, as well as to determine more exactly what are its general laws. In connection with it there is, perhaps, no need to do more than direct attention to the view given of the stages through which life must pass. The life of every finite being, it is maintained, must traverse an infinite number of spheres or periods, which are entered by the gate of birth and left by that of death. In each period the direction pursued is first upward and then downward, and both the ascending and descending course is divided into three ages, the characters of which are determined *a priori* from the formula—*Ganzheit, Selbheit,* and *Ganz-verein-Selbheit.* In the first age of life, a being exists either as a germ within or in intimate dependence upon a higher whole, another being; in the second age, distinguishing itself from, and opposing itself to, that and other beings, it attains independence and individuality, although at the cost of manifold error and evil; and in the third age, recognising its relations to other beings, and conforming itself thereto, it reaches a state of fully-developed power and harmony, in which it has complete mastery over all its faculties, and exercises them in a right way, and to the greatest good of itself and others. When it has risen to its full maturity—to the highest point destined to be reached by it in a single cycle of life,—it forthwith begins to descend, and passes through three ages, which are counterparts to those through which it ascended, but which succeed one another in the inverse order. Each age may be subdivided, according to the formula by which it was separated from the other ages of its cycle, into three partial ages. No age arises without having been preceded by a long preparation, and, at the same time, no age can be explained wholly by what belonged to the past, every age bringing with it entirely new and distinctive principles, which are inseparable from its peculiar and characteristic idea.

The theory of life and development which Krause has thus far expounded he believed to be as applicable to the history of the formation of a new drop or of a solar system, as to the history of an individual man, a society, or humanity. But now in the last division of his second part—the last section of his work,—he comes to the philosophy—the *pure* philosophy, it will be remembered—of the history of humanity. It is the theory of human development in all parts of the universe, and not merely of human development on the earth. The history of earthly humanity is specially referred to merely for the sake of illustration. Màking a twofold subdivision of this section of his treatise, Krause first lays down certain theorems regarding the historical development of the individual man, and then regarding the historical development of humanity as a collective individuality. He argues that each man brings with him his peculiar genius, disposition, and character (his *Urgeist und Urgemüth*—his *alleineigenthümliche Anlagen des Geistes und Herzens*) from the depths of eternity, from his prior states of being—that every age of man's life has a value and dignity of its own, apart from what it may lead to—and that the number and order of his ages are those which have been *a priori* determined to belong to finite life as such; and this having been done, he proceeds to describe how the life of a particular humanity is related to life in all surrounding spheres—in God, in nature, in contiguous partial humanities—and how it is evolved as an independent and organic whole. His account of the three ages in the history of humanity is of special interest. It is the subject of the last chapter of the treatise under examination, and may be succinctly reproduced as follows.

The first age (*das Keimalter*) is that of infancy and innocence, in which humanity is a feeble but undivided society, protected and guided by higher powers, and extremely susceptible to physical and divine influences. In this age, man existed in a clairvoyant condition with respect to the natural and supernatural world, and, seeing God in all things, his religion was a vague and undefined monotheism. Humanity had at this date no proper historical self-consciousness, and there has come down to us from it only some dim traditions or myths of a paradise or

golden age. Man, although originating organically in every planet when it reaches maturity, is no developed ape, but essentially and widely separated from the highest brutes; and savage tribes are not men in a primitive but in a fallen and degenerate state.

The second age (*das Wachsalter*) is that of youth and growth. It is characterised by the disruption of the primitive unity of humanity, by the acquisition of independence and self-knowledge, by the separation of society into tribes and nations, castes and classes, by division of labour, by variety of activity. This second age includes three periods. In the first, clairvoyance almost ceases, a faint knowledge of the one God is only retained in secret societies and communicated in mysteries, while polytheism prevails, wars rage, and slavery and caste are instituted. The histories of the oriental nations and of Greece and Rome fall within this period. In that which follows, polytheism is replaced by monotheism, but by an abstract and crudely apprehended monotheism which leads to fanaticism, contempt of the world, the slavish dependence of art and science on theology and clerical despotism. The middle age corresponds to it. In the third period, humanity rejects all authority which would interpose between itself and the primary sources of truth, and all restraints on its natural freedom of action. This love of light and liberty is accompanied by the virtues of toleration and philanthropy, by recognition of the rights of others, by the diffusion of knowledge, and the growth of more enlarged and profound views of religion and philosophy; yet the struggle between the old and new, the good and evil, is severe, and existence is self-contradictory, sinful, and burdensome. It is in such a period that we are now living.

The third great age of humanity (*das Reifalter*) is that in which all its powers are fully and harmoniously developed; in which it has thorough mastery both over physical nature and over itself; in which all the societies which compose it unite to form one vast collective and complexly organised individuality; and in which panentheism is universally and cordially accepted as the only true and adequate doctrine either of science or of society. The whole of mankind on earth will be united into

one great, peaceful, and prosperous state. They will not only become conscious of their unity in God and in humanity, but they will practically and outwardly realise it in every sphere of life,—the ethical, the political, the industrial, the æsthetic, the scientific, and the religious. Science and art, religion and morals, law and policy, will all become when they have reached their maturity cosmopolitan, and will all contribute to bind together, to unify, our earthly race into a city and kingdom of God. And even this will not be the end. To the eye of faith, a still wider and grander prospect presents itself. For although, after having reached the summit of an epoch of life, humanity (entire or partial) must thenceforth descend until it reaches the bottom on the other side, not only may each period through which it passes in its downward career be virtuous and happy—not only may each have its own charms and worth, and the last be the most venerable and honourable, as old age is in an individual who has spent his life well—but each period is a step towards a new and higher epoch, towards a far wider and better cycle of being. The humanity of earth may become a humanity of the sun, and enter into connection with the humanities of many a planet and sun, and thus bring nearer the day when all humanity will be one ; when men, not only of all countries, but of all solar systems, will know and love one another, and will work together in unison of spirit.

Having thus given a general account of Krause's philosophy of history, I must now consider critically some of its more marked characteristics. And, first, its method. It professes to be a synthetic, deductive, *a priori* system ; to be derived not from history but from the categories of being and thought, from the very idea of life ; even that portion of it which Krause left unelaborated, the *applied* philosophy of history, is described as purely ideal truth deductively obtained, as a standard by which history is to be judged, but by no means as a theory drawn from history, and worthless if unverified by it. It is, further, one of the most serious and laboured attempts ever made actually to reach such an *a priori* comprehension of history, and in this respect it contrasts most favourably with the historical philosophies of Fichte, of Schelling, of Hegel, &c. Fichte asserted he was able

to deduce *a priori* the world-plan from the philosophical idea of universal time; but he gave no proof of his ability—made not the slightest effort to supply the deduction. Schelling threw over history a number of formulæ which he professed to find necessarily involved in the evolution of absolute truth; but how they were logically so involved he too forgot even to endeavour to show, and so his readers have been left to see in them only casual suggestions, felicitous or the reverse—mere views loosely and carelessly cast forth. Hegel virtually assumes the task of deduction to have been completed when he posits the development of reason as the subject of the philosophy of history, and consequently applies himself at once to master and elaborate the empirical matter, and to pour it, as it were, into the dialectic mould provided for it. Krause's procedure is very different, and in perfect accordance with the view which he gives of the philosophy of history as a science which consists in purely ideal and *a priori* truth. He does his utmost to work out a philosophy of history which shall answer to his description of what a philosophy of history ought to be. He labours manfully to compass a deduction of the law and plan of human development from the absolute first principle, working slowly down through what he regards as the intermediate principles, which are the primary and essential truths of all the chief sciences. His demonstration is so lengthened and elaborate that it may almost be said to include his entire synthetical philosophy. All honour to him for having been thus in earnest even as regards what may be deemed by us an erroneous view. Consistency and thoroughness are always high merits, even although they fail to secure success. In the instance under consideration they have only contributed to make apparent the hopelessness of what was attempted, the impossibility of accomplishing what was undertaken. Krause applies to his task all the faculties of a vigorous and original mind, and works out what has some appearance of being a most elaborate deductive process; but the slightest examination of that process proves its deductive appearance a complete illusion. No minute or subtle analysis is needed to show that empirical truth has been surreptitiously drawn into the pretended demonstration at every step, and

afterwards unconsciously passed off as truth found *a priori* in the pure idea. Thus the idea of life itself, so far as it is truthfully described, is simply a generalisation from our experience of life as it displays itself in the physical world without us, in our own minds, and in history; and similarly, what are represented as the laws of life are mere inductions, valid only to the extent that observation and inference from observation support them. The so-called law of the ages of life, for example, has been derived mainly from observation of the course of individual life to which it consequently applies with tolerable accuracy; while, having been drawn only to a very small extent from a study of the phases through which societies gradually pass, it does not hold true of social development.

It must not be supposed, however, that, because Krause failed to accomplish his immediate purpose, there is nothing to commend, except good intentions and laborious diligence, in what he performed with a view to demonstrate *a priori* the ideal plan and necessary order of historical evolution. Although the truths which successively make their appearance in what ought to be a deduction are in reality inductions, they have none the less, both singly and collectively, an important bearing on historical science. They are inductions from a sphere of experience which is much wider than history proper; and it is only by the help of such inductions that the science of history can ever be raised to any considerable height. It is vain to suppose that history can be in any measure understood without examination of the events which it includes; and yet the most careful study, the most minute analysis, of these events, will not suffice to lead us to its truly scientific comprehension. History is so complex that we cannot hope to discover its peculiar or distinctive laws until we are in possession of wider laws, suggested by analogous phenomena in simpler departments of knowledge, yet capable of being traced through all history, and even of being converted into principles of explanation so potent as to leave only a comparatively small residue of phenomena to be referred to causes which do not operate beyond the limits of human society and its development. Now, Krause's laws of life, so far as true, are of this nature; they are inductive generalisations wider in range,

and yet, on that very account, easier of discovery, than any general principles to be found in history alone. They apply to history because they apply to life as a whole. In other words, Krause has seen that there is the closest connection between life and history, between the science of life and the science of history. He has seen, and expressly and repeatedly declared, that the theory of history must be to a great extent included in the general theory of life; that the philosophy of history must be rested on the broad basis of a universal biology (*allgemeine Biotik*). It has been left to a philosopher of our own day, Mr Herbert Spencer, to give currency to this truth; but even he has not apprehended it with a more comprehensive or tenacious grasp, or a deeper sense of its importance. Krause saw as clearly and insisted as strongly as Mr Spencer has done, that the progress of life and the progress of society are so far correspondent and even identical processes, and that the pages of history must in great part remain undeciphered and uninterpreted, until their key is found in the nature and laws of life. Nor is there anything, I think, included by Mr Spencer in life which was excluded from it by Krause. Certainly Krause included among the general laws of life, which he held a philosophy of history must presuppose, the truths on which Mr Spencer has chiefly insisted—viz., that the growth of all life involves a series of successive changes and a plurality of simultaneous changes,—that it tends, on the one hand, by a process of division or differentiation, from simplicity to complexity, and, on the other hand, by a process of combination and adjustment or integration, from indefiniteness to definiteness,—and that it is a continuous establishment of correspondence between the internal states or faculties of the living being and its surroundings. Of course he mixed up these truths confusedly along with other truths, as well as along with errors and mere fancies, and can scarcely be said to have proved them at all; whereas Mr Spencer has distinguished and defined them with precision, and verified and illustrated them with an extraordinary fulness of scientific knowledge. At the same time, as I shall endeavour to show when I come to examine Mr Spencer's services in connection with these famous generalisations, he has fallen into some errors which Krause has avoided. I can only

regard it as meritorious that Krause discarded every merely mechanical explanation of progress, and did not eliminate the distinctive characteristics of mind from his explanation of history. But, however this may be, it was certainly merit to associate in the intimate manner described the science of life and the science of history. For although the science of history is connected with all the physical sciences, and indeed with all the sciences, it is in the sphere of organic science that we first meet with general truths which may, with due precautions and limitations, be directly transferred to historical science. To carry over into history a law of inorganic nature,—to say, for example, with Saint-Simon, that social states are determined by gravitation—with Fourier, by attraction—or with Azais, by expansion,—is simply to impose on one's self and others by metaphors; but in organic nature we really come face to face with facts which involve truths that hold good under certain limits and with certain qualifications of man and society, and the study of which is a real and almost indispensable preparation for the proper apprehension of the facts of individual and social life which correspond to them. In especial it is there that we first meet with the great fact of development, growth, progress; and it is not more certain that we may carry over from biology into history more than we are warranted to do, and thereby pervert history, than that if we do not carry over much, we shall fail adequately to comprehend history.

And here it must be further remarked that Krause laboured with special zeal to prove society an organism and social evolution organic. Schelling, as I have already said, so employed the idea of organic evolution in general philosophy as to give it a previously unknown extension and popularity. He left it, however, to others to define, to develop, and to apply it; and—not to speak of philosophy, theology, or art—this was done as regards general physics by Steffens, Troxler, &c.; as regards zoology, by Oken, Carus, and many others; and as regards all departments of social science, by Krause, directly under the impulse of Schelling; while Von Baer and the embryologists, Savigny and the historical schools of jurisprudence and political economy, have wrought out and applied the idea in their respective provinces

of research, independently of the immediate influence of Schelling, although certainly not unaffected by him indirectly. With Krause the notion of organism was an *idée fixe*, and he probably sometimes fancied he saw "organic totality" and "organic development" where they had no existence; but he must not, on any such ground, be denied the merit of having exhibited society in his 'Ideal of Humanity' as an organic whole, composed of diverse institutions, each representing a phase of human life, distinct and yet inseparable from every other phase of life—a multiplicity of parts co-ordinated and subordinated with a view to the preservation and development of the whole; and of having shown in his 'Philosophy of History' how a society which progresses tends to become more and more differentiated and integrated, more and more complex, self-consistent, and conformed to its surroundings, or, in a word, more and more organised,—with an ingenuity, minuteness, general truthfulness, and suggestiveness previously unknown.

The notion of organism ought, I believe, to be so extended as to include society, and that of organic development so as to include social development; but when this is done, these notions are undoubtedly very apt to be obscure and even misleading. There is great danger that the differences between a physical and a spiritual, an individual and a collective organism, be overlooked, and, in particular, that due regard be not given to the circumstance, that "among the higher physiological organisms there is none which is developed by the conjunction of a number of primitively independent existences into a complex whole; while the essence and foundation of every social organism, whether simple or complex, is the fact that each member of the society voluntarily renounces his freedom in certain directions, in return for the advantages which he expects from the other members of that society."[1] There is, consequently, great danger

[1] Professor Huxley on "Administrative Nihilism," in 'Fortnightly Review,' Nov. 1, 1871. Mr Huxley adds: "The process of social organisation appears to be comparable, not so much to the process of organic development, as to the synthesis of the chemist, by which independent elements are gradually built up into complex aggregations—in which each element retains an independent individuality, though held in subordination to the whole. The atoms of carbon and hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, which enter into a complex molecule, do not

that the mind take fanciful analogies for scientific truths, and, above all, that it disregard the fact that human progress, unlike physical growth, is rooted in freedom; that while the plant and animal have only a capacity for growth, society has a capacity for progress no otherwise than it has a capacity for degradation, being free at all times to move in more directions than one, to choose between opposite courses—so that although wherever a society progresses there must be certain conditions involved identical with those which are to be detected in the growth of a plant or animal, it cannot fairly be thence concluded that since a plant or animal must grow a society must also progress. Krause has not quite escaped these dangers. He has not, indeed, stretched and strained the parallelism between the individual and the social organism as many have done,—Mr Spencer, for example, when he compares the governing, trading, and working classes of the body corporate to the nervo-muscular, circulating, and nutritive systems of the animal frame, commodities to the blood, and money to the red blood-corpuscles,—but his theory of the ages of humanity supposes the develop-

lose the powers originally inherent in them, when they unite to form that molecule, the properties of which express those forces of the whole aggregation which are not neutralised and balanced by one another. Each atom has given up something, in order that the atomic society, or molecule, may subsist. And as soon as any one or more of the atoms thus associated resumes the freedom which it has renounced, and follows some external attraction, the molecule is broken up, and all the peculiar properties which depended upon its constitution vanish. Every society, great or small, resembles such a complex molecule, in which the atoms are represented by men, possessed of all those multifarious attractions and repulsions which are manifested in their desires and volitions, the unlimited power of satisfying which we call freedom. The social molecule exists in virtue of the renunciation of more or less of this freedom by every individual. It is decomposed, when the attraction of desire leads to the resumption of that freedom the expression of which is essential to the existence of the social molecule. And the great problem of that social chemistry we call politics, is to discover what desires of mankind may be gratified, and what must be suppressed, if the highly complex compound, society, is to avoid decomposition." If these words were intended merely to illustrate and confirm those quoted above, I entirely assent to them; but if meant to show that absolutely or on the whole there is a greater resemblance between chemical synthesis and social development than between organic and social development, I must as entirely dissent from them. There are laws common to the two latter in virtue of both being alike developments far more important than any mere analogy like that described by Professor Huxley. It is, perhaps, unnecessary to remark, that to speak of a chemical atom as "resuming the freedom which it had renounced" is altogether metaphorical language.

ment of the race to resemble that of the individual far more closely than the facts warrant us to believe. What he calls the age of the infancy of humanity is, as described, wholly unhistorical; all records of it have passed away; nothing remains on the earth which corresponds to it; the sole tradition said to refer to it which commands respect in scientific Europe authorises few, indeed, of the traits with which it is delineated. The stationary savage tribes are thrown out of account altogether, and necessarily, for, unlike all known human children, they have neither died nor grown towards manhood; yet are they none the less human societies. And moreover, if humanity has really had a *Keimalter*, during which its existence resembled that of the higher mammalia before and for some time after birth, the various savage societies still existing may very reasonably be held to represent embryological and infantile stages of life,—a conclusion which would necessitate an entirely different account to be given of the whole age than that which we have from Krause. Then it will have been observed that the whole of history proper—the whole of it so far as it is known, and so far as it has yet gone—falls, according to his view, within a single age of the ascending or progressive series of ages. It is entirely included in the second age or *Wachsalter*, for the first age was prior to the existence of historical self-consciousness, and the subsequent ages are still in the future. History can therefore verify only what is said of one of these ages, which is, surely, nearly equivalent to an admission that it cannot verify and does not warrant any division according to ages. The division must depend wholly on the *a priori* idea—a most insecure basis. As to the periods comprehended in the second age, it is to be remarked, that the nations which are described as representing periods that are past are still existing, so that humanity appears as an individual of which some parts grow no older with the lapse of years while others do, of which some members are much older than others although they have lived no longer—a somewhat perplexing conception.

With regard to the second and main danger, that of ignoring, implicitly denying, or imperfectly recognising the freedom which

underlies and pervades human progress, Krause must be acknowledged to have been aware of its seriousness, anxious to avoid it, and convinced of having succeeded. To have done justice to free-will in history is a merit which he claimed for himself, and which his followers claim for him not only in contradistinction to Hegel but to the historical school. The founders of that school held in almost equal aversion the abstract propositions of the philosophers of the eighteenth century, and the grandiose formulæ of the philosophers of their own day; and so over against the "rights of man," "law of nature," and extemporised "constitutions" of the Revolutionists on the one hand, and the fanciful constructions of Schelling and the logical legerdemain of Hegel on the other, they placed what they deemed historical reality; they said, Let us sweep away all these abstractions and formulæ regarding nations and their governments, and cleave to fact alone, which will be found to be this, that there are no absolute laws or universal ideal formulæ—that all truth and good in social and political matters is relative and particular—that what is right and proper for one time or people is not so for others—that institutions "are not made but grow"—that laws to be of any value must be the products of the instinctive and emotional life, the prevalent habits and wants of a community, and not of the deliberate and reflective wisdom of a few of its members. The highest historical generalisation to which this school could rise—the only one of any considerable height indeed on which it could consistently venture—was precisely that to which Krause attached so much importance,—viz., that social development is an organic growth, closely analogous to individual development. Vast beyond all description and praise as its services to historical study have been, this thought has been the sum and substance of its general historical philosophy. No wonder, then, if some or even most of its members have made too much thereof, which there is little doubt they have done. The followers of Krause are justified in charging them with having treated what is a free and moral organism as if it were a physically necessitated organism, with having eliminated liberty from social life, and with having re-

ferred to blind instincts and the fatalistic action of habits what is due to reason and voluntary agency. On the other hand, it may, I think, be maintained with truth, that while the implicit denial of the free and moral character of historical growth was no necessary or legitimate consequence of the principles or method of Savigny and his disciples, its recognition was an inconsistency in Krause. It was natural, considering their circumstances and feelings, for at least the earlier representatives of the historical school to overlook that social growth may or may not be organic, but is most certainly voluntary; they were not, however, logically necessitated to fall into any such error; they were not bound to anything which the comparative and inductive method of research did not establish, and *that* might and ought to have led them all, as it has led many of them, to a full acceptance of the fact of national freedom and responsibility. But Krause professedly derived his theory of the ages of humanity purely from the *a priori* idea of life; and it is difficult to see how, consistently with that view, their evolution, succession, and whole character could be other than necessary. Freedom is a fact which cannot be deduced *a priori*. Further, finite liberty is represented by Krause as so absolutely dependent on the infinite liberty of God, and the human life as so comprehended in the divine life, as to render his assertions of man's freedom, and of man's responsibility for the evil which arises from the abuse of that freedom, singularly perplexing. In fact, his panentheism, I fear, has not succeeded in straining out all the evil of pantheism, while taking up into itself all the good that is therein, but shows itself defective and inconsistent just where pantheism has so generally proved itself morally vicious. He has fully and explicitly accepted the plain testimony of consciousness and of conscience in favour of freedom, responsibility, personality; but he has also accepted a method of reasoning and a number of principles with which that testimony cannot be reconciled.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that the Krausean philosophy of history includes many merely fanciful elements. That must be evident from the summary of it which has been given.

The reader acquainted with the speculations of Origen, will have observed that the boldest of them have been appropriated by Krause as if they were demonstrated truths. He deemed thought to consist of what he called *Schauen*, intuition, vision; and certainly if what he has told us about solar and planetary humanities be true, his *Schauen* or vision must have been of the most piercing kind, putting to utter shame the astronomers with all their telescopes.

CHAPTER XI.

HEGEL.[1]

I PROCEED to the consideration of the Hegelian philosophy of history. It is a part of the greatest philosophical system which has appeared since that of Kant. However far one may be from being a disciple of Hegel, it is impossible to refuse to acknowledge that a richer treasure-house of philosophical thoughts scarcely exists than that formed by his eighteen volumes. Sir Alex. Grant has felicitously said that "to borrow philosophy from Hegel's 'History of Philosophy,' is like borrowing poetry from Shakespeare, a debt that is almost inevitable;" and the remark may be extended to all the other great works of Hegel, the 'Phenomenology of the Mind,' the 'Logic,' the 'Encyclopedia of Science,' the 'Philosophy of Law,' the 'Philosophy of History,' the 'Æsthetics,' and the 'Philosophy of Religion.' It is very possible, after honest study of Hegel, to doubt altogether the legitimacy of his method, to disapprove of many of his conclusions, to be conscious of great defects, to be often unable to make out what he means; but quite impossible to deny to him an extraordinary wealth of thoughts which can be understood, and which are of the most profound and precious kind. It is a simple matter of duty to recommend students of philosophy to make themselves acquainted with Hegel; for, however anti-Hegelian they may find reason to become, he, if they

[1] The two best biographies of Hegel are 'Hegel's Leben, Supplement zu Hegel's Werken,' 1844, by Rosenkranz; and 'Hegel und seine Zeit,' 1857, by R. Haym. His philosophy has produced works without number, explanatory, critical, apologetic, antagonistic, &c. One of the most genial and mature is Dr Hutchison Stirling's 'Secret of Hegel,' which has given a highly beneficial impulse to philosophical study in this country. What Dr Stirling, however, regards as *the secret* of Hegel, is probably no more than a very imperfect simile.

would ever form for themselves a philosophy worthy of the name, is the thinker of the century from whom they will require to borrow most; and in philosophy, no less than in the special sciences, much borrowing is indispensable, even to the most original—a truth which Hegel well knew and fully acted on, borrowing the thoughts of every man whom he believed to have had much thought in him, and by re-thinking, making them always his own, and often truer and completer than they were before.

The Hegelian is of all philosophies that in which the spirit of system is strongest. It claims to be all-comprehensive, and to find for everything the one place which is proper for it. Everything, in fact, according to it, is but a particular phase, a definite *moment* of one thing and one process, and can appear only where it does. Thought alone is, for it moves itself by an inherent principle from the absolute first of pure being into everything. All that is, the material and the moral world, nature and history, science, art, and religion, are but stages of an idea apart from which they have no existence, parts of a thought which philosophy enables us to re-think, and so in a way to re-create. There are three chief stages in the evolution of this thought; for, first, it moves through all those universal notions which underlie both nature and mind, and which they presuppose—and in this stage it is the subject of the science of logic; and then, secondly, it, this same thought, particularises itself, and projects itself out of itself, and passes through the various spheres of nature, mechanics, physics, organics—and in this part of its course it is the subject of the philosophy of nature; and finally, it frees itself from nature, the state of otherness to itself, and returns upon itself as free spirit, as conscious reason, not accomplishing, however, its complete deliverance into perfect freedom and the knowledge of itself as the truth of all being before it has gone through all the stages of individual life, and realised itself in many outward forms, with which stages and forms the philosophy of spirit is conversant. One of the forms in which the concrete conscious spirit realises itself is the State, and the philosophy of history is that part of the philosophy of spirit which traces the evolution of reason manifesting itself as the State.

The Hegelian philosophy is then, it will be observed, profoundly and essentially historical throughout. Its one subject is a vast process or movement, of which what is called history is only a stage. Logic, in which may be included metaphysics, and even mathematics, is a history, although one elevated above time and particularity—the history of the eternal and universal processes of the pure idea; and each physical science is a history of some part of the progress of the idea on its way through nature towards consciousness, as each mental science is a history of some part of its course through human life and society, towards absolute fulness and perfection of knowledge and existence. Now there is perhaps a truth, and even a great truth, in this view. There is a world of verities, accessible in some degree to the mind of man, beyond the created world,—there are absolute truths which cannot be thought of as otherwise than certain before a particle of matter or any finite spirit was called into being—truths essential to intelligence as such, and therefore truths which must from all eternity have belonged to the self-existent intelligence. Then the matter of the universe may have passed through various phases before the stellar bodies and our planet were formed and arranged as at present; and in these vastly remote epochs of time the laws of mechanics and chemistry may have alone ruled, and the former may have even ruled before the latter, although the reverse could not have happened. The order which astronomy traces must have originated before any period of time to which geology can go back, and geology and the various branches of palæontology are conversant with a long series of ages in the history of the earth prior to the history of man. It is not unreasonable therefore to think, with Hegel, of the universe both of nature and of mind as a vast process, an evolution, a history; nor unreasonable to believe that the sciences may be so arranged by the co-ordinating power of an elevated philosophy as to exhibit the orderly and rational sequence of all the stages of this process, so that to the scientific man they shall be the successive chapters of the book of the history of the universe, and to the religious man the successive chapters of the book of the revelation of God in creation. On the contrary, everything leads us to believe this thought true, and one of value

for general philosophy, and of special value for the philosophy of history. It cannot be without influence on the historical philosopher to be taught to see that the history which he studies, the progress which he traces, is a form or instance of a wider history, a wider progress; that man, in the exercise of his free-will, follows a direction on the whole conformed to that which nature has followed since its creation under the constraint of undeviating physical law; and that, notwithstanding essential differences, the more recent and the narrower history has many remarkable resemblances, and many intimate relations, to the older and broader history.

But Hegel goes far beyond all this, and takes up a much more extreme position, when he resolves all that is into the moments or stages of the idea. Here we cannot follow him; and so far from being helped to understand the place and significance of history by being told that it is one of these stages of the idea, we are, on the contrary, involved thereby in manifold grave perplexities. The Hegelians, Gans and Rosenkranz, for example, tell us that Hegel's Philosophy of History has a great advantage over all others, in that it is connected with a system of thought logically elaborated even to its minutest members, and can exhibit the *logos* of history as a phase of the same process and obedient to the same law of dialectic movement as the *logos* of nature, of the soul, of law, of art, &c. But, obviously, whether this is to be regarded as an advantage or not, must be dependent on whether or not the logical elaboration of the general system of thought is correct, and especially whether or not its fundamental principle is true. If we cannot accept the system as a system, if we dispute the soundness of its basis and the validity of its method of construction, the very closeness of the connection between the whole and its parts must be a disadvantage, a source of dissatisfaction to us, in our study of any particular part, as in that case each part involves the difficulties of the whole. It is no advantage to us, but the reverse, to be told that history is a particular stage in the movement of the idea according to a certain logical process, if we cannot admit that there is any such thing as that idea which is made the substance of all thought and all existence, and if we cannot

admit that any such process as that according to which it is said to determine itself is legitimate. It sounds well to hear Hegel himself declare at the commencement of his 'Philosophy of History' that the only presupposition he has to make—the only thing he has to take for granted,—is that there is reason in history—that history is a rational process. All the comfort, however, is in the sound. For the reason which he presupposes is reason in the Hegelian sense—is just the Idea become conscious and working out its own freedom. It is a reason which is but a form of the one subject of his philosophy. To presuppose it, is consequently to presuppose the whole of that philosophy; and at least the whole of it up to the point reached by the Idea before it becomes the theme of the 'Philosophy of History.'

The philosophy of Hegel pretends to resolve all into reason and to deduce all from reason; to be demonstrated from beginning to end; to start with the absolute first, the simplest notion of reason, pure being, being so pure as to be nothing at all, and thence to derive all knowledge and evolve all reality, in a continuous process of reasoning from abstract and implicit to concrete and explicit, everywhere determined by the principle of the identity of contraries—the principle that each thought and thing has in it the opposite of itself, that all position is likewise negation, that in affirming itself a thought or thing likewise denies itself, but instead of thereby destroying itself, reconciles itself to itself in a new concrete positive thought or thing which is all the richer and more complex for the negation of the previous one, and which is in turn no sooner posited than rejected with a like result as before, so that the process has no stop until the truth of all knowing and being is completely evolved. Thus, according to Hegel and his followers, "a diamond-net" is woven which let down into the universe takes it all up; a dialectic elaborated which connects, arranges, and explains all the elements of thought and existence, nature in all its departments, the soul in all its phases, history in all its stages, politics, art, religion, science.

The present is not the place to examine these pretensions. My task is merely to estimate the worth of Hegel's philosophy

of history, and I wish to separate that as much as possible from his general philosophy. At the same time, there must be no doubt as to the completeness of my rejection of the Hegelian view of reason and its evolution. To me that reason seems to be not only something above human apprehension, but to be the contradiction and destruction of all human intelligence, and its evolution to be the reversal of the fundamental laws of valid thought: to me the Hegelian dialectic seems from beginning to end no diamond-net, no solid and substantial thing, but an intellectual cobweb or rope of sand. I have read what the most distinguished Hegelians have written to the contrary; but, with all possible respect for the zeal and talent of men like Rosenkranz, Erdmann, Michelet, Kuno Fischer, Vera, and Stirling, I think they have done little to elucidate, and still less to vindicate, Hegel's extraordinary ratiocination.[1] As this is a mere statement of opinion, made simply to inform the reader that in my view the Hegelian philosophy of history is not the better but the worse for its connection with the Hegelian dialectic and the Hegelian philosophy in general, I do not wish that any value should be attached to it in itself. But is it not confirmed by history? Is the day of Hegelianism not obviously already near its close? In Germany, although it has still numerous and distinguished adherents,—more, perhaps, than any other philosophical school,—they are with the rarest exception men advanced in life, and long known as writers, men whose characters were formed under social influences which have lost their power, and men who with all their talents can make no disciples; they are veteran officers destitute of an army and incapable of gaining a recruit. Hegelianism is rapidly dying in Germany. It is

[1] Among works which expose the unsatisfactory character of the essential principles of the Hegelian method and system I may mention the following: Trendelenburg, 'Logische Untersuchungen' (1840, 3d Aufl. 1870), and 'Die logische Frage in Hegel's System' (1843); the very able recent vindication of these 'Investigations' by Kym under the title of 'Trendelenburgs Log. Untersuchungen und ihre Gegner in the Ztsch. für Phil.,' Bd. liv. Hft. 2, and the 'Philos. Monatshefte,' iv. 6; Ulrici's 'Ueber Princip und Methode der Hegel'schen Philosophie (1841); Karl Ph. Fischer, 'Speculative Charakteristik und Kritik des Hegel'schen Systems' (1845); E. v. Hartmann, 'Ueber die dialektische Methode,' 1868; and the book of Haym already referred to, 'Hegel und seine Zeit.' Dr Stirling's criticism of the latter work, however, is, so far as regards Haym's representation of Hegel as inspired by the "ideal of a Hellenic Cosmos," as just as it is vigorous.

making some converts at Naples, is studied at St Louis, and talked about at Oxford,[1] but it has little chance of taking a firm root or widely spreading anywhere.

The objections to Hegelianism are unfortunately not merely speculative. It is consistent with it, so far as consistency can be predicated of such a system, that it should be able to incorporate any moral or religious doctrine—able to deduce the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity, the Lutheran doctrine of the sacraments, and even the Romanist doctrine of the immaculate conception (the latter is, of course, no deduction of Hegel's own) —and yet, even while doing so, to leave it doubtful whether there is a God or a future for the individual soul. Hegel claimed for his philosophy that it was not only a support of conservatism in politics, but of orthodoxy in religion; and yet whether he should be described as theist, pantheist, or atheist, is a point on which not only his foes but his disciples are divided, so that you have Hegelians of every shade of religious opinion, each man believing himself faithful to the system of the master. This must be the fault of the system. It is absurd to say that Hegelianism is not responsible for the religious aberrations of its adherents, and that the Hegelian left party, both the largest and most talented Hegelian party, has wilfully rejected the light that is in Hegel. It is utterly impossible that a great number of able men, whose days and nights have been spent in the enthusiastic study of Hegel, should have been able to deny that his teaching was theistic, unless it were exceedingly obscure and ambiguous where obscurity and ambiguity are least permissible. After careful consideration of the so-called declarations of Hegel in favour of the divine personality, and of what has been said by Rosenkranz, Stirling, and others to prove him a theist, I continue to believe the Hegelians of the left the truest interpreters of their master on this point, although their practical aims are altogether different; and as this conclusion is also that of Ahrens, Baader, Chalybäus, J. H. Fichte, C. Ph. Fischer, Herbart,

[1] The Clarendon press has recently sent forth an excellent translation of the Logic which forms the first part of Hegel's 'Encyclopædia,' with elegant and interesting 'Prolegomena,' by W. Wallace, M.A., Fellow and tutor of Merton College, Oxford.

Hoffmann, Krause, Leonhardi, H. Ritter, Sengler, Sigwart, Staudenmaier, Trendelenburg, Ulrici, and Weisse, earnest and competent students of Hegel, I cannot but think that even if erroneous the cause must be some grave fault of Hegel's own, some central and inextricable confusion, some fundamental ambiguity. It is, in fact, the case that Hegelianism, although the most elaborate of all idealistic systems, presents only the feeblest of barriers even to materialism. It is true that thought is placed by it before matter, and matter is represented as the stage of a process of thought; but since the thought which is placed before matter is unconscious thought—thought which is neither subject nor object, which is therefore not real thought, nor even so much as a ghost or phantasm of thought,—matter is still the first reality, the first actual existence, and the power in matter, the tendency in it to rise above itself, the root and basis of spirit subjective, objective, and absolute. It is only through holding to a personal and conscious, a living and perfect reason, as the true first, that we can keep off materialism, and such unthinkable thought as the pure thought of Hegel is no real defence against it; and that Feuerbach and so many others should have been Hegelian idealists one year and materialists the next was quite what might have been anticipated. Hence I cannot regard even the Grand Être of Comte as a more unworthy substitute for the true God than the idea of Hegel, which begins as being equal to non-being, and ends as absolute spirit, the last result of the process of universal becoming—a spirit which, as it has evolved itself out of nothing, may, like Budha, evolve itself again into nothing, into Nirwana. It would be a poor choice if we were shut up to accept either the empty and self-contradictory conception in which the universe of matter and of mind is said by Hegel to commence, or that which is said to be their ultimate result, or even both and the whole process between, as Deity. If it be said, as of course it will be, that pure being is but the first of Hegel's logical explanation and not the actual first, the answer is obvious that such an assertion as that the order of reason is *not* that of reality is for an Hegelian intellectual suicide, the admission that he is prepared to treat absolute thought as badly as his opponents argue he treats common

thought, willing to make game of the reason as they maintain he makes game of the understanding, as little honest with his own logic as they affirm he is with formal logic—an admission which resolves Hegelianism into a big and bad joke.

The result of the obscurity, ambiguity, or whatever it may be called, of the Hegelian idea of God, has naturally been that Hegelian authors have given us philosophies of histories, or at least hints towards such, from almost every possible point of religious view, orthodox and heterodox, theistic, pantheistic, and atheistic, according as they belong to the right, the left, or the central party. While from the extreme right more than one historical system has come decidedly churchly, even decidedly Romanising, from the extreme left have come others violently anti-Christian, painfully irreligious ; and between these two extremes all intermediate grades of religious belief have found expression in general conceptions as to the course and significance of human history. Through Hegel's own 'Philosophy of History' there flows a deep religious spirit. This is quite compatible and consistent with what I have just said as to the religious character and bearing of his system. The most widespread and the most wonderful of all the religions of the East, Budhism, is believed by many of those best able to judge to be essentially atheistic; but although Budhism should be, as it seems to be, resolvable into atheism, although its fundamental principles involve atheism, it would be unjust to regard Budhists as atheists in spirit and feeling. Nowhere, perhaps, beyond the pale of Christendom, has the religious spirit found truer expression than in the saints of Budhism. If millions of men can thus stultify themselves and accept a creed the fundamental principles of which are in such contradiction to its practical spirit, it is in nowise incredible that even a Hegel should have done the same. I am far, therefore, from bringing against the man Hegel the charge which I think has been fairly urged against the philosopher Hegel, or rather against his system. I am content merely to say, that if he meant to deduce theism, his system has not allowed of his giving a distinct and adequate expression to his meaning; and that his disciples have often deduced from it very different conclusions, which they have attempted to apply to the philosophical elucidation of history.

I most cheerfully recognise that, although the reason which he speaks of as in history is, as a phase of the idea, a reason which I cannot believe in, and still less regard, as the providential Reason which presides over human affairs, almost all that he says of that reason is admirably true of Divine Providence, the actual *logos* of history; that his philosophy of history must be ranked among those which have best borne out the claim to be a Theodicy, a vindication of the ways of God to man, which have done most to show that the history of the world is the product of an infinite and active reason, which has made use of all finite volitions, interests, and activities, as its instruments to accomplish a great and holy end.

As already said, it is no part of my work to discuss the Hegelian method in itself, but only to show how it has affected the Hegelian philosophy of history. One way in which it has done so has been unnaturally to separate the chief developments of history, and unnaturally to exclude some of the most important from the province assigned to the philosophy of history. It is a consequence of the Hegelian method that everywhere in the Hegelian philosophy we find division by three. It has three great divisions—the Logic, the Philosophy of Nature, and the Philosophy of Spirit; each one of these divides itself in a threefold way, and each subdivision thus obtained has its three parts, &c. Thus the Philosophy of Spirit includes the doctrines of the subjective, objective, and absolute mind; and the doctrine of the subjective mind comprehends anthropology, phenomenology, and psychology; the doctrine of the objective mind — legal right, morality, and ethical obedience; and of the absolute mind—art, religion, and philosophy. Now the philosophy of history is that part of the philosophy of spirit which traces the evolution of reason in the State; it is, that is to say, a part of the doctrine of the objective mind, and consequently has nothing properly to do with the histories of the phases of absolute mind — with the developments of art, religion, and philosophy. These developments lie outside of the province of the philosophy of history, and that philosophy cannot, consistently with its place in the Hegelian system, treat of them at all. They must not only belong, but exclusively belong, to æsthetics, the phil-

osophy of religion, and the history of philosophy. Now this is not only an error, but an error of the most serious kind. It makes an adequately comprehensive philosophy of history impossible. It shows that, consistently with Hegelianism, consistently with the triplets of its dialectic process, no such philosophy can be written; for it is not more essential that all the chief developments of human activity should be traced separately than that they should be combined and connected. In fact, the great difficulty, the chief problem of the philosophy of history is, not the analysis into distinct developments and the tracing of the course of each of these, difficult and important as that is, but the subsequent synthesis of them, the exhibition of how they act and react on each other, and concur to a common aim, and the discovery of the laws which are involved in the general movement of human history. But unless the whole Hegelian method and system be false, such a synthesis is, in the philosophy of history, impossible. Any attempt to compass it must be for Hegelianism an inconsistency. It may assert that the separate developments will coincide or correspond,—that art or religion at least, if not philosophy, will have the same epochs, will pass through the same stages, as political life; and Hegel has done this both in his 'Æsthetics' and 'Philosophy of Religion:' but this is not enough; the assertion and even the proof of the correspondence of the separate developments is not historic synthesis, which involves a real bringing together of all the elements and developments of human life, so as to exhibit throughout the succession of generations and events their interdependence and interaction. This is not to be found in Hegel; and it would be an inconsistency if it were to be found. In this respect the inferiority of Hegel to Comte is decided.

The Hegelian view, then, of the philosophy of history is, from the cause indicated, essentially narrow and imperfect; and it can neither be extended nor corrected. It is true that a well-known Hegelian, Professor Michelet of Berlin, in a correspondence with a Swedish Hegelian, Borellius, has made an attempt to remedy the defect, to get over the difficulty. He would consider the phenomenology of the spirit as the first part of the Hegelian philosophy, the whole system of science as the second

part, and history as the third and last part. But if this delivers from one difficulty, it involves in others still worse. For unless both the phenomenology of spirit and the philosophy of history are not only assigned their new positions, but allowed at the same time to retain their old ones, the whole system is disorganised, and instead of there being three sciences of the subjective mind, and three sciences of the objective mind, there can only be two. Michelet would give them each two places, but surely that is a kind of plurality of offices for which nothing can be said. It is not two philosophies of history we want, but one which shall be adequate. Besides, it is altogether un-Hegelian to close with a philosophy of history. It is a direct contradiction to suppose that after the idea has attained to a full realisation of the absolute, it should still have to pass through the phases of history. To represent the absolute as issuing in history is to represent it as absorbed in history or as no absolute at all.

Having insisted on this, it is necessary for us, in justice to Hegel, to add that the very phases of humanity which have been thus separated by the self-evolution of the dialectic from the province of the philosophy of history, are those whose histories he has traced in the ablest and most instructive way. Art, religion, and philosophy are all conceived of by him in an essentially historical manner; and he has so treated them all as undoubtedly to enrich historical science. The 'Æsthetik' is the most attractive of all his works, and wonderfully rich in positive knowledge and original remarks. Probably no other great speculative philosopher has had an equally extensive acquaintance with all the forms of art, been so familiar with the chief poets of different ages and nations, travelled so much simply to enjoy beautiful landscapes, buildings, statues, and paintings, visited so diligently the concerts, theatres, galleries, &c.; and probably no other great speculative philosopher has had a more manifoldly susceptible and profound emotional nature. It is in the resulting mastery over the materials as a whole, in the direct and living relationship of his mind to an extraordinary number of the products of art in every department, that his chief merit lies. He certainly knew *the facts* quite otherwise than a Hutcheson, or

Alison, or Jeffrey; and he tries to deal with the whole of the facts, instead of merely trying to excogitate answers to the two abstract questions—What is beauty? and, How is it perceived? The part of Hegel's own work which so far corresponds to theirs I do not find very original or remarkable, but rather essentially a skilful restatement of ideas previously expressed by Schiller, W. von Humboldt, Solger, and especially Schelling. What is abstract and general is least his own and of least worth; the more he deals with details the more interesting and valuable are his remarks. There is, however, a simple grandeur about his leading generalisation as to the development of art which has made it celebrated. He regards art as the effort by which the Spirit seeks to realise the Idea through a sensuous medium,—

> "The spirit and the power,
> Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
> A new earth and new heaven,"—

and finds that the ideal and the material are so related that it must have three distinct forms, which correspond to the three great epochs of history. When matter predominates, when the colossal and bizarre prevail, and thought struggles painfully, feebly, confusedly through, art is in its symbolical form, and such is the art of the oriental world, that of India and of Egypt. When the idea finds for itself in matter a clear and adequate expression—when it is in such equipoise with the medium of its manifestation that there is perfect beauty of form, while yet what is deepest and finest in the spiritual life does not disclose itself—then art is classical in form, and such was the art of Greece and Rome. When this equipoise is disturbed, but in favour of the spirit—when spirit predominates and makes of matter ever increasingly its mere sign, and displays ever increasingly its inner and finer life—then art is romantic, and such is the art of the modern or Christian world. The different arts themselves correspond more or less to these three forms and their epoch, so that architecture is characteristic of the obscure, symbolical, oriental form; sculpture of the clear, definite, beautiful, Grecian form; and painting, music, and poetry, of the varied, deep, and subtle romantic or Christian form. The spirit of each epoch, nevertheless, pervades and

characterises all the varieties of art. There is a sublimity in this generalisation which it is impossible not to admire. Its truth, however, its applicability to all the facts, may be probably more than doubted. Art aims of its very nature at perfection in execution, at the complete expression of thought or feeling through arranging and shaping material substances, through colour, and sound, and language; and the measure of its success determines whether the art is good or bad, but not its form or kind. The ideas of one form or kind may be simpler than those of another, as of classical than modern art, and the work of expressing them may be in consequence easier, and, as a rule, more successful; but, whether the ideas be crude or subtle, simple or complex, art invariably seeks their perfect expression through the appropriate sensuous media. The material and the ideal in art change together, so that their relationship to each other never essentially changes; and hence the principle which determines what are the great epochs in the development of art must be drawn, not from that relationship, but from the nature of the ideal itself, which cannot be known dialectically, but only through the historical study of its phases. The facts, I think, confirm this view of the inaccuracy, or at least inadequacy, of the Hegelian formula. Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, and not a little even of Hindoo poetry, does not answer to the description of symbolical art, and a vast amount of what is most distinctive in all the varieties of modern art cannot be naturally reduced under the category of romantic. The assertion that the different arts are characteristic of different epochs is utterly untenable. Architecture, for instance, does not belong even in degree more to the oriental than to the classical and Germanic world, nor music and poetry more to the latter than to the two former. The Hegelian formula is therefore, although suggestive of not a little remunerative thought and research, merely a splendid failure. The real worth of Hegel's work, however, is not dependent on the truth of that formula, but on the rare depth of his insight into the manifold individual phases of art, and of the conditions, spiritual and physical, out of which they have historically arisen.[1]

[1] Perhaps in no department have the Hegelians distinguished themselves more

His 'Philosophy of Religion' seems to me neither so profound nor valuable as his 'Æsthetics'; it is, however, very remarkable, and will always be spoken of with respect and gratitude, even by those who are most convinced that religion can only be studied aright when studied in accordance with the rules of ordinary scientific induction. Religion he regards as the effort of the soul to realise its unity with the Absolute or Divine,—

> "God only to behold, and know, and feel,
> Till, by exclusive consciousness of God,
> All self annihilated, it shall make
> God its identity."

The phases of religion are viewed as so many stages in the development of the consciousness of this unity, and its chief stages are, of course, argued to be three in number; they are designated the religions of nature, of the individual spirit, and of the absolute spirit. In the first of these stages, God or the Absolute is felt as natural being, natural power—and this stage has itself three steps: that of magic, represented by Fetichism, Shamanism, Lamaism, and Budhism, in all which religions God is confounded with nature or individual man; that of imagination, represented by Brahminism, in which God is distinguished from man and nature, as the substance one and identical from its multiple and transient manifestations; and that of light and symbol, represented by the religions of Persia and Egypt, both species of dualism, which exhibit God as asserting His spiritual ascendancy over nature, and so becoming the object of the religions of spiritual individuality. This second class of religions, in which the Divine is viewed as subject, has likewise three representative forms: Judaism, the religion of sublimity; Greek polytheism, the religion of beauty; Roman polytheism, the religion of the practical understanding.

than in æsthetics. Hotho, Rosenkranz, Rötscher, Ruge, Schasler, and Vischer, have all written works of permanent value on beauty and art. The 'System der Æsthetik' of Weisse was published before Hegel's 'Æsthetik,' and is in the main an independent work. It is exceedingly to be regretted that there is no account in English of what the Germans have done for æsthetical science. The German scholar will find abundant information in the 'Geschichte der Æsthetik' (1858) of Zimmermann, the 'Geschichte der Æsthetik in Deutschland' (1863) of Lotze, and the 'Kritische Geschichte der Æsthetik' (1872) of Schasler.

The absolute spirit after passing through these forms comes to know itself as such; and in this self-knowledge God is reconciled with the world and man, and apprehended as essentially Triune, —Father, Son, and Spirit. This absolute religion is Christianity, and it differs from absolute philosophy only in form or expression; it is the same in substance. Now, probably here, too, neither the general nor subordinate divisions are accurate, nor consequently the notions on which they proceed; but Hegel's penetration into the character and significance of the religions which he passes under review, and his grasp of their relation to one another, are certainly always richly suggestive, and very often truthful. Unfortunately his treatment of Judaism and Christianity is by far the least satisfactory part of his work, and vitiated by grave faults both of omission and commission. Both in the 'Æsthetics' and 'Philosophy of History,' he betrays a strangely mean conception of the significance of the Jewish nation; but his injustice reaches its culminating point in the 'Philosophy of Religion,' when he gives a lower place to Jewish monotheism than to classical polytheism. His explanation of Christianity seems to me essentially erroneous in spirit, method, and aim, and yet even through it the light breaks wonderfully at many points.

As to the history of philosophy itself, the most decided opponents of Hegel, and those who assign least value to what he has done in other departments, have joined in warm recognition of his services in this. He originated a new epoch in its study, which has been amazingly fertile in admirable works, and yet his own remains unequalled after all the others have drawn freely from its spirit and substance. The part devoted to Greek philosophy is an immortal masterpiece. And although the thought that the succession of philosophical systems in history is identical with that of the categories in logic is doubtless false, as the force of facts has compelled some Hegelians to admit,[1]

[1] *E. g.*, Schwegler and Zeller, whose inconsistency in making the concession mentioned has been indicated by Stirling in 'Annotations' to his translation of the former's 'History of Philosophy,' and more fully shown by M. C. Monrad in a Latin epistle addressed to the latter—'De vi logicæ rationis in describenda philosophiæ historia.' If Drs Stirling and Monrad had taken in hand to examine and refute Professor Kym's 'Hegel's Dialektik in ihrer Anwendung auf die

inconsistent and indeed fatal as the admission is, still Hegel has indicated even the general course of man's search after the absolute, after ultimate truth, better than any other person.

While, then, he has been led by the evolutions of his dialectic to an erroneous separation of the elements of history, and an erroneous abstraction of some of the more important of them from the province of the philosophy of history, he has so far redeemed the error by his masterly historical treatment of them thus separated and abstracted. He has also often allowed truth to prevail over system. *Logically* he was bound to exclude the consideration of religion, art, and speculation from his treatment of history—*really* he has not done so; and we find not only some beautiful pages expressly on their connection,[1] but the oriental world described chiefly through its religion, and the Greek world chiefly through its art.

We now come to the direct examination of what he himself regarded as a philosophy of history. He gave a first outline thereof in the last twenty paragraphs of the 'Philosophy of Right,' published in 1821, and lectured on the subject in the five sessions of 1822-23, 1824-25, 1826-27, 1828-29, 1830-31. From his very fragmentary manuscripts of these lectures, and the note-books of his students, the earliest edition of the 'Philosophie der Geschichte' was worked up, after Hegel's death, by Gans, in 1837; and a second enlarged and improved edition by the philosopher's son, Charles Hegel, since distinguished as an historian, in 1840. Both editions are before us; but the second (containing as it does the important preface of Gans to the first edition), is alone necessary. It is requisite to give a condensed statement of the contents of this work before proceeding to its criticism.

History is of three kinds—original, reflective, and philosophical; original, when derived directly from observation, when an author describes what he has himself seen, heard, and lived amidst; reflective, when personal experience is transcended, and the historian has to use such powers of diligence, insight, criticism, and generalisation as he possesses on materials sup-

Geschichte der Philosophie,' they would probably have found their task a little more difficult.

[1] Phil. d. Gesch., 60-66

plied by others, in order to form and convey a representation of some past epoch, of some special phase of human life, or of the general course of events in a country, or even in the world; and philosophical, when it unfolds the rational development of the universal spirit in society. Spirit is the opposite of matter, and its essence is freedom, as that of matter is gravity. The final cause of history is that the spirit may know itself as free; and to reach this goal, the spirit avails itself of the appetites, passions, private interests, and opinions of individuals and peoples so cunningly, as always to secure profit to itself out of their loss, evolving from their gratification and excesses the principles of truth and justice designed to regulate and restrain them. From time to time it manifests itself in great men, world-historical individuals, whose private aims are its purposes; and these men are not to be judged by the same rules of conduct as others,—such mighty forms must trample down many an innocent flower. Indeed, the happiness or misery of individuals is no essential element in the rational order of the universe; over them accident and particularity are allowed by the reason to exercise their monstrous power. Those persons who form "ideals" of truth, justice, and liberty, as applicable to the individual units of the social mass, and who condemn, in consequence, what is as not what it ought to be, are superficial, fault-finding, and envious: the real world is just what it ought to be; the real is rational, and the rational real. The eternal reason being immanent in the minds of men, the general ideas or substantial principles of religion, art, philosophy, and the state, are immanent in their actions, and in essence simple and eternal, although their forms are variable and temporary. The last of these ideas—the state—is the basis of all the others, the centre of all the concrete elements of social life, the moral whole out of which the individual possesses no worth. It is freedom manifested and organised; for only when the individual will unites with the universal will, as found in the laws and institutions of a nation—only when mere personal convictions do not rule, but the spirit realises itself outwardly in some positive, definite, special form as its own law—is there true or rational freedom, which is thus no mere natural property, no operation or result

of free choice determined simply by reflection, no abstract indeterminate principle, but a real and definite condition of being possible only in *a state*, the embodiment of a determinate and particular spirit, the spirit or genius of a people, a stage in the development of the universal spirit. It follows that the state may be said to be the object of history,—the succession of states, the object of universal history. The world-spirit, in virtue of its character and inherent activity, does not give rise to mere change, nor to a recurrent series of changes, a cycle of changes, nor does it show the direct and quiet growth of organic life; but it works towards the complete manifestation of its own substance, and towards self-consciousness by a reluctant and stern struggling against itself—a slow, painful, and gradual advance; and nations—states—are the stepping-stones in its march through time, the stages in its career of conflict and victory. It quits one only to enter another, and has no sooner fully unfolded itself within the limits of a nationality, than it begins to break them down as too narrow, in consequence of which the nation decays and dies, but the spirit gains new strength and a wider comprehension of itself. Where there are no states properly so called, there may be families, clans, and peoples—there may be migrations, wars, and revolutions—there may be remarkable events and considerable culture; but there can be no history. History began to be written as soon as true states appeared—as soon, therefore, as history itself began; and the periods, whether centuries or millennia, which peoples may have previously passed through, are to be regarded as in their own nature ante-historical. They lie beyond the pale of history and of the philosophy of history.

The character of peoples is prefigured in the character of the earth; and as there are non-historical peoples, there are also non-historical countries. Nature is external to history, yet its necessary basis, and must be rated neither too high nor too low. The extremes of heat and cold both exert a power which prevents the self-development of spirit, and hence the temperate zone is the true theatre of history. Australia and the islands in the Southern and Pacific oceans are physically immature; America is at the best but an echo of the Old World; Africa

shows only undeveloped spirit in bondage to the powers of nature; Asia and Europe are alone historical. Excluding Siberia as belonging to the frigid zone, the rest of Asia is divisible into a massive upland, great river-plains, and a combination of upland and valley in the sea-bordered countries nearest to Europe and Africa. The rearing of cattle is the business of the uplands, and there the patriarchal principle rules society,—agriculture of the river-valleys, and there property divides men into lords and serfs,—commercial activity characterises the coast countries, and is accompanied by civil freedom. Geographical distinctions are less marked in Europe, which consequently accommodates itself more readily to all the movements of the spirit.

The course of the sun is a symbol of the course of the spirit; and as the light of the physical sun travels from east to west, so does the light of the sun of self-consciousness. Asia is the determinate east or absolute beginning, and Europe the determinate west or end of history. Its great *moments*, stages, or epochs, are three in number—the Oriental, the Greco-Roman, and the Modern or Germanic. In the first, the spirit slumbers ignorant and unconscious of that freedom which is its very essence, and patiently submits to civil and spiritual despotism, so that *one* only is free, and the rights of individuals are unknown: in the second, the spirit is awake to these rights in some, but not in all forms; it has a partial consciousness of its true nature, and *some*, but not all, are free: in the third, the spirit knows itself as what it is, as essentially free, and knows that *all* have inherent rights to rational freedom. In the first, the infinite and substantiality predominate; in the second, the finite and individuality; and in the third, the infinite and finite, the substantial and individual, are united, are reconciled.

The history of the oriental world begins with China, the characteristic principle of which is a material unity of organisation which excludes individual reflection, will, and energy in every sphere of life. All that can be called subjectivity or individuality is absorbed in the person and will of the emperor, the father of the nation, who has the same absolute and compre-

hensive power over its members which each father has over the members of his own family. Hence, while science is in a certain way greatly fostered, there is no free scientific research; while art in some of its branches is most ingeniously and diligently cultivated, it remains servile and imitative; while the code of manners is elaborate, there is no real morality of the heart and conscience; and while there is a complicated religious ceremonial most strictly observed, there is no sense of a spiritual life, of the soul's personal relationship to a spiritual world, the emperor alone being regarded as in connection with heaven, and that a connection not spiritual but physical and magical, or Fo—pure nothing—being set up as God, and contempt for personal existence as the highest perfection.

Instead of the material and outward unity characteristic of China, there is found in India the most marked diversity. But this diversity is also material and outward, a division of society into masses according to external differences of occupation and civil condition, into *castes* fixed by an eternal arbitrary will through the mere fact of birth; and hence its distinctions, far from being the natural result of individuality, show that the spirit in India has not attained to the consciousness of any such thing as a proper personal life, freedom, inward morality. This rigid separation of men by external distinctions being carried into morality and religion as well as into civil life, so that what are virtue and piety in one caste, are vice and impiety in another, shuts out the Hindoo people from truth at every point, and condemns them to a slavery of soul as well as of body so complete, that there is no escape from it. Further, while China is the region of prosaic commonplace understanding, India is that of extreme sensibility and unregulated imagination. The spirit is there in an inebriate and delirious dream, revelling in a maze of wildest extravagance, clearly conscious of nothing, confusing together what is most sacred and what most gross, sublime truths and ludicrous absurdities, spiritualising sense and sensualising spirit, regarding the universal as particular, and the particular as universal, apprehending nothing steadily and firmly, but everything as some other thing than itself. Its dream has found embodiment in the monstrous medley of

pantheism, naturalism, and idolatry which constitutes Brahminism. In Buddhism, the most widely extended of religions, the same fundamental principle is to be met with but in a modified form; the spirit shows itself in a natural, not an inebriate dream-state, and the whole social and political life is, like the religious life, calmer and more settled. This faith has spread through China, and given to the Chinese mind a faint degree of spirituality not originally belonging to it. It regards the ultimate or supreme existence as abstract nothingness, union with which, or the highest perfection, is only obtainable through the annihilation of all desire and activity; and presents as types of this perfection and objects of worship human beings—departed Buddhas or living Lamas,—who are adored, not on account of their particular individuality, but of the universal essence therein embodied.

The peoples of Eastern Asia are isolated and stationary; Western Asia is related to Europe, and like it the subject of development, and of political and social revolutions. Persia was the first strictly historical nation. It was an empire in the same sense that Germany or the realm of Napoleon were empires, being composed of a number of states united by general enactments, yet each retaining a character, laws, and habits of its own. In Persia, the spirit first frees itself from that substantial unity of nature which is unintelligible, unconditioned, and indeterminate, and gets recognised as *the light*,—not a particular existence, but pure manifestation—not merely the most universal material element, but also spiritual purity and goodness,—a principle which involves the consciousness of its opposite, darkness, evil, and of the power and obligation to prefer light to darkness, good to evil. In India, the highest spiritual notion, Brahm, is that of an abstract unity, the one being of nature, which is no object of consciousness; but in Persia this abstract being becomes an object of consciousness under the form of sensuous intuition; and this intuition, being that of light, as what only manifests what bodies are in themselves, as substance which leaves what is special intact, as a unity which rules individuals, only that they may develop and realise their individuality—at once connects many nations, and

allows them free growth, the full play of their distinctive peculiarities. Among the many nations belonging to the Persian empire, one, the Jewish nation, makes the remarkable advance of discarding the limitation of sensuous intuition, while continuing clearly to apprehend the absolute being as an object of consciousness. Nature and spirit are separated; the former is depressed from a primary to an altogether subordinate position, and the latter exalted as the alone essential truth; their conciliation is not yet thought of. That spirit and nature should be thus distinguished and the pre-eminence given to spirit, constitutes a decided progress; it is, nevertheless, the natural consequence of the rigidity and exclusiveness of the mode of distinction, that all previous religions, all other gods, should be denounced as utterly false—that only one people should be acknowledged to be God's people—that the morality enjoined should be, although strict and exalted, narrow and intolerant—and that the political life should be at once proud and feeble.

Egypt unites the elements which in the Persian empire appear separately,—the sensuous among the Babylonians and Syrians, the spiritual among the Phœnicians and Jews. The Stoic Chæremon thought the Egyptian religion mere materialism—the Neoplatonists regarded it as an allegorical spiritualism; and contradictory as these views may seem, they must be combined in order to give us the full truth. In Egypt, spirit is matter, and matter spirit; the spirit feels itself shut up in matter, and strives, with a blind restlessness, to liberate itself from it. The symbol is the presentation of this self-contradiction and of the problem which it involves; and we meet with it everywhere in the architecture, hieroglyphics, stories, customs, and religion of Egypt. By its very nature Egypt is an enigma. Its true symbol is the Sphinx,—itself a riddle, an ambiguous form, half brute and half man, which shows the spirit as beginning to rise above and look beyond nature while yet imbedded and imbruted in it. Its last word is the inscription of the goddess at Sais,—"I am that which is, which was, and which will be, and no one has lifted my veil. The fruit which I have produced is Helios."

The veil was lifted by the Greek Apollo. "Man, know thy-

self"—Helios—that which is clear to itself—is the solution of the enigma of Egypt. When Œdipus, says the legend, answered the riddle of the Sphinx with the word *man*, the monster cast itself over the rock. The mystery of Egypt—the mystery of the whole East—emerges into the light, and finds its explanation in Greece. The childhood of history has now passed away, with its vagueness and want of insight, its dependence and credulity, and the spirit manifests itself in all the freshness and fulness of youthful life. Greece is the world's youth; and it is no accident that its story begins with Achilles, the ideal youth of poetry, and ends with Alexander, the ideal youth of reality. In Greece we first feel ourselves at home, for here man first felt himself man, first burst the bonds of the dark powers of nature, first dared with clear head and untroubled heart to study the causes, laws, and ends of nature, and mould her materials as he willed; here spirit emancipated itself and attained *free individuality*, which is the word that denotes what is most fundamental and characteristic in Greece. The formation of this principle was favoured and stimulated by the configuration of the country, the proximity of the sea, the mixture of races, the number of independent towns, by commerce, colonisation, and war, by the whole physical, political, and social situation. Hence Greek individuality never became absolutely free, self-caused, spiritual; it was always conditioned by nature, always influenced from without; it displayed itself only in the transformation of the materials supplied by nature into the expressions of its own conceptions and dispositions: in other words, Greek genius was essentially artistic. The impulse of a central idea, of an internal necessity, urged it incessantly to elaborate natural materials—marble and metal, colour and sound, movements of the body, language, thoughts—into images of beauty, harmonious structures, true works of art. All the products of its activity, even the culture of the individual, the religion, and the political constitutions, may be characterised as works of art. The Greek trained and moulded his own physical being into a work of art from the same motive which made him fashion a stone into a statue. The gods of the mysteries were driven out of Greece by the gods of art,

—those concrete, special, human characters, those finite, plastic forms, devoid of all oriental monstrosity and deformity, which are still able, by the charm of beauty, to exercise a strange attraction on imaginative natures, which still haunt the regions of poetry, and are still objects of æsthetic devotion. The political work of art, the state, was necessarily democratic in form, its members neither feeling dependent on some one individual will, as in the East, nor on the abstract universal will of the state itself, as at Rome. The notion of the state in the abstract was alien to them; what they knew and cared for was Athens, Sparta, this definite form of social life, this particular union of citizens, of men free to enjoy and educate themselves, and able to leave manual toils to slaves. In the earliest and genuine form of their freedom the Greeks lived in and for their country without subjective reflection, without subjecting the public laws and customs to the test of individual conscience and judgment; but this phase of thought was soon reached—the sophists introduced and the philosophers continued it—and Greece rapidly dissolved and decayed in consequence. All wished to govern, none to obey. The towns were torn asunder by factions, the country by civil war. The possession of conspicuous talent or merit sufficed to insure a man's exile or imprisonment. The perfect bloom of Greek life lasted only about sixty years. Its whole history, like that of every world-historical nation, consisted of a period of growth, a period of maturity, and a period of decay: in the first, it gradually unfolded its own peculiar principle of individuality; in the second, it maintained and spread that principle by external conquest; and in the third, through unfaithfulness to its own and the admission of a foreign principle, it became ever more and more diseased.

The transition from Greece to Rome is one from poetry to prose, from a graceful ideal life to a life of obedience to positive law with a definite aim, from joyous youth to austere manhood. Rome gathers all the gods into one pantheon and all human units into one state, incorporates individuals and nations into one vast person, and subordinates and sacrifices everything to this universal existence, to the furtherance of Roman policy. What is most characteristic of Rome is the combination of

abstract universality with extreme personality—of conflicting principles, which make the internal history of the nation a long struggle between two factions, and its external history a heartless unrelenting pursuit of dominion. The antithesis involves from the first essentially contradictory elements, whose inherent incompatibility becomes gradually more apparent, until at length individuality gains ascendancy to such an extent that the community can only be kept from dissolution into its component atoms by external constraint, by despotism, the absolute sway of a single will. It was not Cæsar that destroyed the Republic, but necessity. The Empire continues and completes what the Republic began. It breaks the heart of the world, causes it to feel the nothingness of natural life, drills and disciplines it into aversion to what reality has to offer, and thereby drives the spirit back into the depths of its own inner being, compels it to know itself in its essential nature as a spirit, and to seek satisfaction in a spiritual empire. Such an empire was revealed and founded by Christ—a Man who is a God, God who is man—in whom God is recognised as Spirit, and the reconciliation of the world is accomplished. In Him the idea of eternal truth is apprehended, the essence of man perceived to be spirit, and the fact realised that only by deliverence from finiteness, by purification from speciality, by self-surrender to pure self-consciousness, can truth, the end of life, be attained; that end becomes henceforth not to know man as at Athens, but to know the spirit, to live as spirit. Those who would so live are the members of the Christian Church, the realm of the spirit, the kingdom of God. But only slowly and with difficulty does the Christian principle pervade society. Men are still destitute of true insight and morality, and unable, especially in the secular relations of life, to act according to truth with the freedom which properly belongs to spiritual beings, and hence the *spiritual kingdom* has to assume the form of an *ecclesiastical kingdom* with authoritative rulers.

The seed deposited by Christianity required to be developed in the German world after it had overspread the Roman world and incorporated its culture. This new world or epoch may be called the old age of spirit; but it is an old age not of weakness

like that of nature, but of ripeness and strength; it is the fulness of time, the end of days; for in its principle, the truth in Christ, every aspiration of the soul has satisfaction provided for it. At the commencement of the epoch, however, the principle is still abstract and recognised only in the strictly religious sphere, the inner shrine of the heart; it has not yet penetrated into, far less thoroughly leavened and transformed, secular existence. The whole epoch must be divided into three periods. The first begins with the German migrations and ends magnificently with the vast empire of Charlemagne. It is characterised by a rude union, a superficial and external combination, of the spiritual and secular, by want of cohesion and consistency, and by a powerful tendency towards particularity, towards the breaking up of all properly generic and universal social relations into accidents and conventions, private rights and special privileges. While this tendency is operating in the West, there arises in the East a supplemental and counteractive movement, the Mohammedan, which has as its principle fanaticism for an abstract thought, the absorbing desire to see the will of the absolute one, Allah, before whom all limits and distinctions except faith itself vanish as worthless, prevail to the annihilation or subjection of everything else. In the second period the coarse unity of the first is broken up; the Frank empire divides into nations; individuals revolt against the authority of the law, but are compelled to seek for protection from powerful men who become their feudal lords; and the Church as spiritual separates from the State as secular, yet shows itself thoroughly secular, sensuous, and selfish. The antithesis of the Church and State, the struggle of the one as a theocracy against the other as a feudal monarchy, is the cardinal point on which medieval history turns; but both institutions are also internally inconsistent, self-contradictory: the Church, because it materialises the absolute even to the extent of presenting Christ in a piece of consecrated bread, holds the laity dependent on priests and saints for communication with God, in direct violation of the fundamental truth of Christianity, the essential unity of the divine and human, and labours by shameful means to acquire wealth while professing to despise it; the State, because its nominal head, the emperor,

has no real authority—because nothing can be more unfaithful than the so-called feudal fidelity, its foundation, depending as that does on arbitrary choice or sentiment—and because in the characters of its individual members the revolting spectacle is displayed of piety united with crime, the sincerest religious devotion with barbarous ignorance and the wildest and vilest passions. Instead of Christian freedom there is thus, on the one hand, the most degrading bondage—and on the other, the most immoral anarchy. The history of medieval Christendom is that of the development of its self-contradictions, and it culminates in the Crusades, when Europe, in its blindness, goes forth to seek the living truth of spirit in a tomb. It finds the tomb, but is met as it were with the old words, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." The immediate result is discontent and doubt, but these are succeeded by a general awakening of the mind, a new interest in science and art, bold adventures, great geographical discoveries, remarkable inventions, and at length a revolution in the whole system of men's thoughts. Thus the third or final epoch of the modern or German world is introduced. Spirit now becomes conscious of its freedom, and the antithesis of Church and State begins to vanish. Man recognises that the spiritual can only be realised through the secular, and that the secular must be developed out of the spiritual; that states and laws are merely the manifestation of religion in the relations of the actual world. This truth has been proclaimed both by the Protestant Reformation and the French Revolution; to convert it into fact is the task which the nations of Europe have before them, and which each of them is accomplishing with more or less success in its own way.

We have now before us a general view of Hegel's philosophy of history. It is impossible to deny to it either grandeur or value, but criticisms and objections present themselves at all points. We can only give expression to a few of these, but may, nevertheless, as well begin at the beginning.

What is the object of the philosophy of history? Universal history itself, says Hegel. And that answer is at least not false, if Hegel will only adhere to it, which, however, he will

take care not to do, because a great deal less than universal history is far too big for his formulæ. But, letting that pass for the moment, What is history? The answer of Hegel is, the development of spirit. Spirit is the basis of history, the substance of history; and matter or physical nature requires to occupy the attention of the philosophical student of history only so far as it is related to spirit. Hegel forgets to ask, How far is it related to spirit? How and to what extent do climate, soil, and food, the appearances of nature, geographical situation, and physiological qualities, influence the development of the human mind, and determine the course of human history? The pages which treat of "the geographical basis of universal history," cannot with any propriety be referred to as containing such an inquiry, consisting, as they do, of a series of ingenious but dogmatic assertions of analogies and affinities between the physical features of countries and the mental peculiarities of their inhabitants, some of which are doubtless true and suggestive of useful research, although the greater number of them appear to be fanciful and misleading. In Hegel's Philosophy of History there is not only no serious scientific inquiry, but absolutely nothing which deserves the name of inquiry at all, into the influence of physical agencies on history. Instead of undertaking the investigation of that difficult subject, Hegel satisfies himself with oracularly declaring that "Nature ought not to be rated either too high or too low" ("Die Natur darf nicht zu hoch und nicht zu niedrig angeschlagen werden")—a safe utterance, certainly, but yet a rather disappointing one when found to be really all that so wise a man has got to say on such a question. He has, in fact, either so overlooked what the question involves, or treated the little of what he has seen it involves in so capricious and unscientific a way, that all who are inclined to believe the physical factors of history powerful and pervasive factors, must regard his philosophy of history as mainly a castle in the air. Far from being, as some of its eulogists say, a proof of the vanity and worthlessness of historical philosophies—like those of Comte, Buckle, and Draper—it is a vindication of their existence, the evidence of their necessity. So long as philosophies of history are written with views of the

relationship of nature to history so superficial as those of Hegel, others will be written resolving all the facts and movements of history into physical causes and laws.

Then, what is the spirit which Hegel speaks of, and what does it develop? We are told that it is the "idea" or "reason," the infinite substance and energy of the universe, the essence and truth of things; and that what it develops is the consciousness of itself in time. When history is described, therefore, as the development of spirit, that is equivalent to describing it as the growth, in self-consciousness, of the idea, that strange something which is equal to nothing, but has the power of becoming everything, and actually accomplishes the feat. It is, consequently, not with the history of men and women, nor with the history of peoples, that the philosophy of history has to do, but with the history of the self-consciousness of, speaking metaphysically, the idea, or, religiously, God. This idea, or God, or idea on the way to be God, or God going through the stages of the idea in order to come to the knowledge of itself or Himself, has to become finite in men, or rather in great men—Socrates, Pericles, Alexander, Cæsar, Luther,—and in nations, or rather in celebrated nations—China, India, Greece, Rome, and the Germans; and its history is the alone subject of the philosophy of history. What a monstrous and absurd conception! And yet Hegel, in his Philosophy of History, starts with it, claims to have a right to assume it as being already demonstrated in his other works. Fortunately we know what Hegelian demonstration means. It is not proof, deduction, in the ordinary and only legitimate sense of the terms; it cannot be reduced to syllogistic forms, does not obey syllogistic laws; it presupposes a false separation of the reason from the understanding, and, under the pretence of checking the presumption of the latter, allows the former the most extraordinary liberties, and, in particular, exemption from the logical laws of thought, the axiom of identity, and the principle of contradiction. Hegel could not fail to be conscious that he was setting aside, in his argumentation, the authority of the syllogism, and breaking one or other of its laws every few minutes; but, being a man not easily daunted, he calmly claimed to have a right to do so. It was

not he who was wrong, it was the syllogism, which might be good enough for the ordinary understanding and common people, but was no valid criterion of speculative reason, or obligatory standard for true philosophers. In fact, "with a boldness worthy of a better cause," finding the syllogism his enemy, he declared open war against, and made a direct assault on, the syllogism. But, as was to be expected, he hurt himself more than he hurt the syllogism. The reasoning which he employed against it was so unfair and feeble as to show that the cause which needed such reasoning was desperate, and that the dialectic which pretended to be above the necessity of conforming to the laws of the syllogism was a delusion. The so-called demonstrations of the peculiar logic of Hegel have in them nothing formidable or entitled to credence. Their conclusions must be judged of in and by themselves. Let us so judge of that particular conclusion which is supposed to disclose the character of spirit.

Spirit, Hegel tells us, is the antithesis of matter; the essence of spirit is freedom, while that of matter is gravity: spirit is free because it has its centre in itself, and matter gravitates because it tends to a centre; spirit has its essence in itself, and matter has its essence out of itself. Now, even these are assertions which Hegel has not only failed to prove, but which are not likely ever to be proved. But what are we to think when Hegel adds that freedom, the essence of spirit, is not actually, but only potentially, in spirit—that spirit tends to be free, but is for very long not free — that it first attained freedom among the German nations under the influence of Christianity? It is sufficiently perplexing to hear that the essence of matter is not in matter, and that the essence of matter is the result of a tendency to unity, a striving to attain a centre; but it would be still more so to be told that the essence of matter only belongs to some portions of matter peculiar to China or Japan, being only potentially, *i.e.*, not at all, in other matter;—and it is precisely in this way that Hegel speaks of spirit. It is, in fact, a direct contradiction to say that freedom is the essence, the sole truth, of spirit, and also that it is the result of the process of the development of spirit. The contra-

diction might have been avoided had freedom not been identified by Hegel with the consciousness of freedom; for in that case he might have said that the essence of spirit was freedom, and the end of spirit the consciousness of freedom; but he expressly holds that *freedom is the consciousness of freedom*, and that *the consciousness of freedom is freedom*. This view is the natural consequence of a psychological doctrine which he has expounded in Section IV. of the Introduction to the 'Philosophy of Right'—viz., that the will is a kind of thought, and not a special or separate spiritual power.

Repeatedly and expressly Hegel affirms that the end or purpose of historical development is freedom, and he invariably represents the course of the development as a series of stages in the growth of freedom. How happens it, then, that so many writers have urged as the most serious objection to which his historical philosophy is liable that it is necessitarian, fatalistic? Is this ignorance? Is it mere perversity? Some Hegelians think so. But no. The only ignorance shown is on the part of those who have the simplicity to rest in the words of Hegel as if he used them in the plain honest way of a Hobbes or a Locke. There is no doubt that he tells us the will is free; but neither is there any doubt that he tells us the will is free means merely that the will is will. The will is free as will. As weight cannot be separated from matter, as weight is matter; so freedom cannot be separated from will, so freedom is will. Now, if this be the case, it is certainly wonderful that there should be any want of freedom in history, or any possibility of growth in freedom; but, when language is so used, it is not in the least wonderful that many should hold that the word necessity might have been substituted for freedom and been equally appropriate. Further, not only, according to Hegel, is freedom the will, but the will itself is thought; freedom is not what is commonly called freedom, but the consciousness of freedom, and even the consciousness of a kind of consciousness—the self-consciousness of the absolute. Now, when a man plays in this fashion with words, it is of little consequence which words he uses; and although he may produce marvellous effects in making one thing pass for another, no trust can be put in what is manifestly intel-

lectual conjuring. And still further, it is not men nor nations which, according to Hegel, are free, but the spirit, which reveals itself only in a few men and a few nations. On these and other grounds, little value is to be attached even to his most explicit declarations of belief in freedom. Whether he really believed in it or not in a true sense, must be determined mainly by examination of his entire exposition of the course of events. But it seems to me, whenever it comes to that, his defenders find little, if anything, to say; while the case of those who charge him with the suppression of freedom in history becomes overwhelming. He undoubtedly everywhere speaks of freedom, but he nevertheless explains everything as necessary; not a place is left for a single historical event out of the sphere of the logical evolution of the only substantial spirit in history: the freedom of the idea is seen to be at the most its spontaneity; true freedom to be, in fact, according to Hegel, identical with absolute necessity.

In some remarkable pages Hegel insists that the final cause of history is gradually realised through the conflict of the passions, private aims, and selfish desires of men and nations, which the universal reason, in its cunning, uses and sacrifices for its own advantage. Underlying private passions and individual views there are universal principles, which are gradually evolved by the very activity of warring desires and intellects. This general truth leads Hegel to the assertions that the state is the result of the evolution of these latent objective and universal principles out of subjective and particular passions and interests, and that great men are the founders of states; and these assertions to a number of observations on states and great men which are of the most dubious character. All the more dangerously, because darkly and vaguely, optimism, hero-worship, acquiescence in might as right, and the necessity of war, are suggested to be profound philosophical truths. Cousin in France, and Carlyle in England, have employed in the service of the same dogmas far greater literary skill and even greater force of reason; indeed no one could well be more superficial and sophistical than Hegel on all these points. The justice due even to the errors indicated, demands, it seems to me, that they

should be criticised as presented by Cousin or Carlyle rather than by Hegel.

The final cause of history is said to be freedom. If Hegel used the term freedom in the ordinary sense, it would be valid to object to this affirmation, that freedom is essentially a means and not an end; that the spirit is free not for the mere sake of being free, but in order to follow what is true, and practise what is good. By using the term, however, in a sense of his own, he escapes from this objection. He means by freedom the idea of the world-spirit, and by its attainment the evolution of all that the world-spirit contains, the manifestation of all that it is capable of. The world-spirit, however, seems to contain only thoughts, although it can make use of desires and passions to evolve and express its thoughts. It seems to be in itself mere intelligence; its freedom is but an evolution of intelligence, a process and product of consciousness. It is free in virtue of being conscious of freedom, instead of conscious of freedom in virtue of being free. Now, the realisation of its freedom being, according to Hegel, the history of the world, the latter itself is made to be simply a growth of consciousness, a process of thought, the successive apprehension of a few great ideas through which the absolute reaches self-knowledge. The millions of individuals, the multitude of nations, which do not embody these ideas, have no historical worth; the few individuals and nations which do, have historical worth only in so far as they embody these ideas. Feelings, desires, deeds, institutions, have in themselves no direct historical worth. Truly the spirit must be very cunning, and very cruel and selfish besides, for what it contrives to sacrifice to itself is nearly the whole of humanity and history. And to what end? All in order that the spirit may learn that two propositions about itself are not quite true, and that a third is true—these propositions being such that it is most wonderful how so cunning a spirit could ever have been ignorant of their character. Whence all this waste? Why, instead of creating humanity, and sacrificing the most of it, and toiling slowly and painfully through nations and ages, did the spirit not create Hegel alone, and find out what it wanted at once?

Hegel's historical philosophy is intimately and inseparably

connected with his political philosophy. He regards the state as the object of history—the succession of states as the object of universal history. I have already had to object in Kant and others to this view, and need only say now, that in Hegel it was the necessary consequence of a thoroughly false conception of the relation of the state to society. Wishing to resist and defeat liberalism, the principle of which he fancied to be the supremacy of mere self-will, he fell back on the obsolete pagan notion that man exists for the state, and not the state for man; and maintained that the general will realised in the state is the essential law of reason, that all morality lies in the individual or subjective will surrendering itself to that general or objective will, and even that in such self-surrender consists all true freedom. He turned his absolute idealism in the political sphere into a crass realism; insisted that philosophy had no right to get beyond what was, but had only to seek to comprehend it; denounced those who ventured to criticise political institutions, and to say this or that ought or ought not to be, as superficial sophists; and advised the government—a government which certainly needed no advice of the kind—to look after them. What is rational is real, and what is real is rational.[1] It is not wonderful that the then Prussian Government should have admired very much this rosy view of real existence and cavalier way of treating radicals and reformers, or that it should have filled the chairs of philosophy in the universities and the pulpits of the churches with men who were willing to teach so pleasing a doctrine; but the futility of the whole procedure should have been seen through long before now, and those persons who still believe that Hegel did much either to refute a false liberalism, or to serve the cause of true social order, cannot be remarkable for political perspicacity. When Hegel taught the supremacy of the will of the state, and, in fact—like Hobbes—deified the state, he simply taught in another form the false-

[1] I object to the use which Hegel makes of this maxim in his 'Philosophy of Law;' not because I overlook what he has said about "reality" or "actuality" in the logic, but because I think what he there wrote did not warrant the political application to Fries and others; nor from inattention to what he has said in explanation in the introduction to the 'Encyclopædia,' but because I find the explanation altogether insufficient.

hood which he pretended to confute. Few democrats have advocated so explicitly the supremacy of particular will; for few of them have failed—so far as mere words are concerned—expressly to maintain, that not the will of individuals, but the laws of universal reason, ought to rule in human affairs; whereas Hegel expressly identifies with these laws, with divine will, the will of the state, which may be just as capricious, selfish, unscrupulous, and cruel as the will of a very wicked man, and is, perhaps, seldom as honourable and just as the will of a really wise and good man. The creed of Hegel was not a wise conservatism, demanding due respect for moral authority, but a political pantheism, absorbing all rights and liberties, and logically leading to fatalism, to acquiescence in might as right, to the glorification of all successes, however brutal or unjust.[1]

The world-spirit, or the spirit of history, according to Hegel's teaching, is not to be found wherever men are, but always building up or breaking down some particular nation which it encounters on its path from the East to the West. It is ever in some positive definite form, some individual state, and ever moving forward in a single straight line. It is the one subject which produces and passes through in succession the various phases of faith and culture, always shedding its old skin before it assumes a new. It left China for India, India for Persia, &c., and has never inhabited two places at once nor one place twice. Now, is this true or false? Is it fact or fiction? Is it a conclusion which thought has established and can vindicate, or a delusive poetical *Vorstellung* which thought cannot and will not own? To me it seems to be the latter. The spirit which pervades history moves, according to my view, not along a single line but over a vast surface. It is present with all humanity, and in its movement all humanity moves. It did not require to leave China in order to occupy itself with India, Egypt for Greece, Italy for Germany. History includes the coexistence as well as the succession of states. It is the vast complex of human facts in space and time; and although it may be specially interesting at one point in one age and at another point in

[1] In the above remarks, I refer only to the principles and spirit of Hegel's political philosophy, not to its contents, in which there is much to admire.

another age, the interest of the whole is always greater than the interest of any part. Hegel erroneously finds the principles of progress, not in principles which underlie the general elevation of the intellectual and moral condition of mankind, but in those which divide mankind into nations. He makes of progress a fact which is not for the common good of all, but only for the special advantage of the last comer; so that China with its hundreds of millions of people must remain for ever on the lowest step of the ladder of history, and all the other nations must remain on the particular steps to which the spirit raised them in its passing visit—that spirit or *Geist* having finally settled in the German mind. The farther west a nation lies the higher it must be ranked, although the more western nation may have disappeared ages ago, and the more eastern may be as flourishing to-day as it ever was. Thus Hegel was reduced to treat Egypt as more modern than any of the historical nations of Asia, the civilisation of China as inferior to that of Assyria, and the mythology of Greece as a nobler product of spirit than the theology of India or even of Judea. He represented the stages of culture more as juxtaposited in space than superimposed in time, a later stage being not historically evolved from or historically based on its antecedent stage, but only logically subsequent to it. Thus logical evolution fails to coincide with historical evolution. In fact, Hegel's whole conception of historical progress as a logical evolution, the moments of which are represented by a linear series of nations, is a crowded nest of absurdities.

We naturally next inquire if he has succeeded in correctly determining the epochs of history, He sometimes distinguished four ages of the world—the Oriental, the Greek, the Roman, and the German—and sometimes three, by treating the Greek and Roman periods as a single age. The threefold division seems not only to be demanded by the dialectic rhythm, but decidedly to be preferred in itself. Almost any two of the great Asiatic nations appear to have been more profoundly distinguished from each other than were Greece and Rome. A classification which represents India as less unlike China than Rome was unlike Greece, can hardly be entitled to serious con-

sideration. The fourfold division conforms better to the assumed analogy between the course of human history and individual life which Hegel borrowed from Herder—the Orientals seeming to represent childhood, the Greeks youth, the Romans manhood, and the Germans old age—but it corresponds worse to the reality. We may confine our attention, accordingly, to the threefold division, the more especially as the chief objections to it apply equally to the other. According to this division the great stages of history are,—(1.) the Oriental, in which substantiality so predominates that only one is free; (2.) the Classical, in which individuality prevails and some are free; and (3.) the Modern or Germanic, in which individuality and substantiality are combined and harmonised, and all are free. Does, then, this formula truly and adequately apply? I think not, for various reasons.

And first, because it confines and contracts history to the deeds and destinies of a few nations within a comparatively narrow belt or band of the earth—the temperate zone. That is the same sort of error as it would be for an astronomer to maintain that only a few of the biggest and brightest of the stars in a particular quarter of the heavens were the proper objects of his science, or for a zoologist to argue that he ought to study lions and tigers, but not rats and mice. No science is entitled to make such exclusions as the Hegelian science of history does. The whole history of science teaches that if we would comprehend what is great, we must not despise what is little. It is not mammoths and mastodons, but nummulites, which tell the geologist how old the Alps are.

Next, in order to get his formula to apply, Hegel cuts off untold centuries from the early history of mankind; and this also, it seems to me, he had no right to do. He begins with China when its character was, according to his own account, fully formed and immobilised; but history, certainly, cannot have begun with a unity of a hundred or two hundred millions of men. Humanity must have had a long existence before what Hegel calls its childhood. This primeval existence lies entirely outside of the formula. Hegel will have nothing to do with it, or with the ethnological, philological, and historical

research through which alone any knowledge of it can be looked for; he deliberately excludes as irrelevant all investigation into origins. We can only in part excuse this error on the ground that such investigation was in his time but little known or practised, for various of his contemporaries accepted, and lived, and worked in the light which he rejected. It was contemporaries of Hegel who first applied with full consciousness of what they were doing the critical and comparative method to biology, language, law, and history; and it is disappointing to find Hegel on this point so far behind them, so completely shut out from the truth by his own hand and system. An historical philosophy which refuses to inquire into the beginnings of human life, law, language, art, and religion, is self-condemned. Its method is hopelessly unscientific.

Third, Hegel's formula is faulty, because it assumes that history is near its close—that there is no new age to be passed through. That assumption was most convenient for his dialectic, and most consistent with his political doctrinarianism; it was, none the less, one rather presumptuous to make, and one which it is rather hard to accept. We naturally wish better reasons for concluding history nearly exhausted than that the dialectic is inadequate to determine the principle of the future, and that the political creed of a new age could hardly, owing to the spirit's dislike to repeat itself, be what was "real and rational" in Berlin in 1820. Had he confessed the incompetency of his philosophy to deal with the future, little could have been said; but implicitly to deny the future, to construe and formulate history as if it were complete, was a very serious step. Herbart has maintained that humanity is still in its infancy—that only a small segment of history has as yet been traversed. I venture not to say that he was right, but I ask if we can prove him to have been wrong—if we can so trace and measure the orbit of history as to know with any close approximation to certainty at what precise point we at present are in relation to the whole, or even whether we are nearer its end than its beginning. I fear we must confess that we cannot—that "we have but faith, and cannot know." And yet there seems to me to be considerable reason for believing that the

end of history is still a long way off. The earth, when interrogated by science, reveals to us the annals of an antiquity so vast, that numbers are almost inadequate to express it, but through every age and epoch of which there has been a purpose working directly or indirectly towards man, preparing for his appearance, preservation, and welfare, and conditioning his destiny. It seems incredible that when it has taken so many ages to erect the theatre, the drama itself should be so short and feeble, as it must be were the history of humanity cut short at present. But why speak of the history of humanity? Humanity has not as yet had a history. Men have had a history; nations have had a history; humanity has had none. It is only the nations of Europe that are in possession of a common life, a common character and culture, and that are all travelling together on the same route and in the same direction, although one may be lagging a hundred years or so behind another; so that to write a general history of them, to trace the growth of a European civilisation, is in some degree possible. But out of Europe there is nothing of the kind. Nations stand completely isolated from one another, or in mere external contact with one another, each embodying a distinct form of life, and resting on the recognition of distinct principles—each acting in obedience to impulses peculiar to itself, and proceeding on a different course than its neighbours. It is in Europe alone that we see the rise, the dawnings, of a history higher than individual or national —a truly human history, comprehending many nations united in the bonds of brotherhood, and fulfilling a common destiny. There is reason, however, to believe that all nations will yet be linked together, and called on to contribute what is in them to the development of our race and the good of its members. The whole course of events decidedly tends and advances to that end. Europe, until comparatively recent times, was broken up into isolated societies, which had neither interest nor sympathy in each other; the feudal nobility, the clergy, and the boroughs, had laws essentially different from one another; their manners were equally different: there were, properly speaking, no nations; there were no general interests, no union, no pervading life. That has, however, been done away; the barriers of

class have been overthrown; nationalities and peoples have risen on their ruins; and now at length the aspirations of men extend far beyond even national boundaries; and the brotherhood of European nations, their *solidarité*, their mutual dependence, is a generally recognised fact. Will the process cease here, or will it, as all other natural and spiritual processes are seen to do, go on to its legitimate issue? I cannot understand why humanity alone should fail to accomplish what its constitution and the character of its development declare it to have been designed for. On the contrary, it seems to me that just as a man of sufficiently clear and profound intelligence living in the fourteenth or fifteenth century—these two great centuries of transition—might have confidently foretold the fall of the medieval feudalism, and the rise of modern nationalities on its ruins; so any man whose eye can take a truthful account of the nature and tendencies of religious, social, and political movements in the present, as well as scan the past, and grasp the principles which have regulated it, may clearly discern that human life will yet manifest itself as a united and universal thing. "For as the earth bringeth forth her buds, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations." If so, however, humanity must be still very far distant from its goal; and to say that no change can occur in the future as great as that which separated the oriental from the classical world—Egypt from Greece—must be an unprovable, if not improbable, assertion.

Finally, the Hegelian formula applies badly even to the comparatively small portion of history which it professes to comprehend and characterise. Hegel has shown a great deal more caution and good sense than consistency or thoroughness in imposing on history so little as he has done. Although it be a fundamental principle of his philosophy that all the categories of the logic should be found both in nature and spirit—that the whole logic should pervade and enclose both "as a diamond net"—he has wisely refrained from attempting to apply that principle in detail, or, in other words, from attempting to make apparent how the system of the categories conditions and explains the

facts of history. He left that task to those whose historical sense was less keen and clear than his own. He not only does not force on history all the categories and formulæ he was logically bound to do, but silently drops almost the whole of them, very much to the advantage, in my opinion, of his subject, although naturally to the regret of thorough Hegelians, some of whom have given themselves a great deal of worse than useless trouble to introduce into history the categories which Hegel prudently left outside. Indeed, as to the subdivisions of the philosophy of history, Hegel, we are told by his son, made some alterations on them in every reading of the course, "sometimes, for example, treating Buddhism and Lamaism before and sometimes after India; sometimes reducing the Christian world more closely to the Germanic; sometimes taking in the Byzantine empire, and so on." While Hegel thus kept his philosophy of history free to a far greater extent than could have been anticipated from intermixture with the distinctive peculiarities and contents of his logic, he unfortunately could not afford to keep it entirely free and pure. He was bound to convince himself and others that the social as well as the physical world could be reduced to order on his principles, and made to yield its secrets at the touch of his method. He was bound to show that the universal spirit, in its march through time towards the realisation of its aim—rational freedom—moves according to dialectic rule and in dialectic rhythm, and so manifests itself in three great stages or epochs, such as those described. A general triplicate formula was far less than was required by his system, and the very least that he could offer. Now, whence is the particular formula with which he has presented us drawn? Well, partly from experience, and partly from the Hegelian logic. It is a rough generalisation of the facts of history, and yet a generalisation of this kind had to be discovered, or Hegelianism would not have been true. Here we touch on a fault which goes all through the Hegelian philosophies of nature and of spirit. All through both, the method is neither *a priori* nor *a posteriori*, neither deductive nor inductive, but a bad mixture of both. It is certainly not *a priori* or deductive in any strict or proper sense; for the facts are looked to, even looked to first, and the

formulæ by which they are at length united are in a sort of way suggested by themselves. On the other hand, it is no more properly inductive; for while the facts are consulted, they are consulted in order to obtain from them a particular kind of response, demanded by the necessities of a system. The actual process followed, therefore, in obtaining generalities, is thoroughly bad—neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, neither one thing nor another, but a blending and consequent confusing of two processes which are both legitimate in themselves, and which may verify one another, but only through coinciding after an independent application of both. It is this undoubtedly illegitimate mode of procedure which has brought Hegelianism into such bad reputation with physicists, with cautious, inductive psychologists, and also with historians devoted to minute research. Its method is not the method of research. We may easily understand, therefore, that the great founders of the so-called historical school—a Savigny, Niebuhr, Müller, and Dahlman—were from the first decidedly anti-Hegelian as to historical views and principles, although in the main at one with Hegel in political sympathies; and that still those best entitled to be called their successors are equally so, whatever may be their political tendencies.

The general historical formula of Hegel—his law of three states—I have already examined in itself, when treating of Cousin, who adopted it; and I have shown, I think, that to affirm substantiality and infinity distinctive of the East, individuality and the finite of Greece and Rome, and the conciliation of the substantial and the individual, the infinite and the finite, to be the task of modern Europe, is to use very vague and ambiguous language, which cannot be made precise and definite without being seen to be false. That in the East *one*, in Greece and Rome *some*, and in modern Europe *all* are free, is an assertion which can hardly require to be proved inaccurate. The oriental, classical, and Christian worlds cannot be summed up in single words and phrases like these. The term substantiality, for example, entirely fails correctly to characterise Asia. In order that it may seem to apply even to China, Hegel is compelled to draw a most one-sided and imaginative picture of Chinese life; to multiply quite mythical statements to the effect

that the will of the emperor is regarded as the sole moral and political law—that intention, motive, subjective disposition, are not taken into account in the estimate of actions—and that no worth or significance is attributed to the individual apart from the state, to a man simply as man; to overlook the feudal epoch of Chinese history and that of the division of the country into separate principalities; and to ignore that Lao-tse and his followers assigned a very subordinate position to the state, and taught individual independence in a manner not unlike the Stoics—that Yang-Choo went so far as to represent the true law of life to be "Each man for himself"—that Mih-Teih resolved all virtue into the internal principle of "universal mutual love"—that even Confucius only inculcated respect for tradition, and established institutions on the ground that they indicated and embodied the moral principles which each individual could easily find within himself, and that he insisted on sincerity of thought and rectitude of heart as the indispensable conditions of all good conduct, personal, domestic, and civil—that "heaven sees according as the people see; heaven hears according as the people hear," is a doctrine inculcated in the sacred books of China—that the highly honoured Mencius was a very advanced democrat—and, in a word, that the Chinese conception of the state was by no means what Hegel described, yet remarkably Hegelian, and that the Chinese conception of heaven was not unlike the Hegelian conception of *Geist*. "He who knows his own nature, and that of all things, knows what heaven is; for heaven is, indeed, the inward essence and life of all things." If the term be thus defective even as regards China, it is much more so as regards other Asiatic nations. It has no appearance of applicability to Vedic India; and even Brahminical India, if its higher life be judged of from its own products instead of from Hegel's account of them, would require to be placed, not in the first, but in the third so-called epoch of history. The term is quite inappropriate to Judea—a nation in which freedom was surely not confined to one person either under the Judges or Kings.

So far as regards matter, the chief defect of Hegel's philosophy of history is one arising directly from the method—viz., the

stress which it lays on the characterisation of nations by words like substantiality, individuality, material unity, material diversity, light, symbol, &c. Nations cannot be thus arranged and labelled like the bottles and boxes of an apothecary. The attempt to do so must lead, and did lead Hegel, to many narrow and unjust judgments. It may not be incompatible, however, with the formation of a still greater number of most profound and truthful judgments, and such undoubtedly abound in Hegel's book. He had vast power of mastering reality; and it is truly wonderful to what an extent he succeeded in mastering it, working as he did with a method so burdensome and erroneous.

The followers of Hegel have laboured assiduously in the field of history as in all other departments of knowledge. Thus, in the history of philosophy, Rosenkranz,[1] Michelet,[2] Schwegler,[3] Marbach,[4] Lassalle,[5] Feuerbach (in his Hegelian period),[6] and still more Erdmann,[7] Zeller,[8] and Kuno Fischer,[9] have rendered services worthy of most grateful recognition. Prantl,[10] has written the only work which deserves to be called a history of logic—a work of enormous erudition. Henning,[11] Müller,[12] Hinrichs,[13] Michelet,[14] Feuerlein,[15] Saling,[16] and especially

[1] Geschichte der Kant'schen Philosophie: 1840. Schelling: 1843. Hegel's Leben: 1844. Diderot's Leben und Werke: 1866, &c.

[2] Geschichte der letzten Systeme der Philosophie in Deutschland, 1837-38, &c.

[3] Geschichte der Philosophie im Umriss: 1848.

[4] Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie: 1838-41.

[5] Die Philosophie Herakleitos': 2 Bde: 1845.

[6] Geschichte der neuern Philosophie von Baco v. Verulam bis Spinoza: 1833. Entwickelung, Darstellung, und Kritik der Leibnitzischen Philosophie: 1837. Pierre Bayle: 1838.

[7] Geschichte der neuern Philosophie: 1834-53, &c.

[8] Die Philosophie der Griechen: 2 Aufl.: 1858, &c.

[9] Geschichte der neuern Philosophie: 2 Auf.: 1865, ff., &c.

[10] Geschichte der Logik im Abendlande: 1855-70.

[11] Principien der Ethik in historischer Entwickelung: 1824.

[12] Der Organismus und die Entwickelung der politischen Idee im Alterthum: 1839.

[13] Geschichte der Rechts- und Staatsprincipien seit der Reformation, &c.: 1848-52. Die Könige: 1852.

[14] Naturrecht, Bd. ii. allgem. Rechtsgeschichte, &c.

[15] Die philosophische Sittenlehre in ihren geschichtlichen Hauptformen: 1857-59.

[16] Die Gerechtigkeit in ihrer geistgeschichtlichen Entwickelung: 1827.

Gans,[1] and Lassalle,[2] have thrown light on the history of ethical and political ideas. The history of æsthetics and the arts has been elucidated by works of Hotho,[3] Rosenkranz,[4] Shasler,[5] &c. The relationship of Baur and Strauss to Hegel is well known. Their critical researches into the history of religion initiated a movement which has been at least amazingly productive of theories and questions, if not of definite and certain results.

Besides attempting to apply their master's principles to the separate developments of history, Hegelians have also attempted philosophically to comprehend and expound general history. Sometimes they have confined their attention to a part of this vast field—as, for example, Carové to the French Revolution,[6] Sietze to Prussia,[7] Gans [8] and Michelet [9] to recent history. Sometimes they have philosophised on history as a whole—as, *e.g.*, Christian Kapp in 'Das concrete Allgemeine der Weltgeschichte,' 1826; and Cieszkowski in his ingenious 'Prolegomena zur Historiosophie,' 1838. In Appendix C. an account will be given of these last two works. I shall there also indicate in what respects the historico-philosophical views of Rosenkranz, Michelet, and Lassalle differ from those of Hegel.

[1] Das Erbrecht in weltgeschichtlicher Entwickelung: 4 Bde. 1824-35.

[2] Das System der erworbenen Rechte: 1861.

[3] Geschichte der deutschen und niederländischen Malerei: 1842-43, &c.

[4] Die Poesie und ihre Geschichte: 1855.

[5] Kritische Geschichte der Aesthetik: 1872.

[6] Rückblick auf die Ursachen der Französischen Revolution und Andeutung ihrer welthistorischen Bestimmung: 1834.

[7] Grundbegriff Preussischer Staats- und Rechtsgeschichte: 1829.

[8] Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der letzten funfzig Jahre: 1833-34.

[9] Die Geschichte der Menscheit in ihrem Entwickelungsgange seit dem Jahre 1755 bis auf die neuesten Zeiten: 1859-60.

CHAPTER XII.

SCHELLING, BUNSEN, AND LASAULX.

Let us now return for a moment to Schelling. We have seen how philosophy in his hands passed through a remarkable number of phases in a very short time; how in the course of some sixteen years it assumed five or six forms so distinct that they may almost be regarded as separate philosophies. He began his philosophical career as a disciple of Fichte, an expositor of that thinker's system of subjective idealism, the distinctive character of which was the deduction of the universe from the Ego. Subjective idealism, however, he rapidly stretched out, so to speak, into the idealism of the *Naturphilosophie,* which maintains that the Ego may be deduced from nature no less than nature from the Ego, and that reason is bound to attempt the twofold deduction. This was obviously a position of most unstable equilibrium—a seat between the two stools of subjective and objective idealism; and it was natural that Schelling should soon seek a safer resting-place, which he did—and for a while believed he had found, in an absolute idealism resting on an absolute reason, a reason wholly one and self-identical, which proceeds from the complete indifference of subject and object, of the ideal and real. That he might have found work enough for the rest of his life in endeavouring to prove this point of view, that all is in reason and may be derived from reason, a true one,—in determining the relation of nature and mind to each other, and to the absolute identity—and, in a word, in logically explaining the universe,—the writings of Hegel abundantly testify; but in the very treatises in which he expounded this phase of his philosophy, an element appeared which speedily led him into an

altogether different path than that followed by Hegel. From "intellectual intuition" he passed on to "vision in God," and from that to the unlimited indulgence of theosophic fancy.

For thirty years after the publication of the 'Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom,' Schelling, who had previously sent forth his compositions with a most lavish hand, allowed only a few brief and comparatively unimportant writings to see the light, and displayed great aversion even to having what he spoke reported. But few and far between as were the utterances by which his silence and secrecy were broken, they were sufficient to show that he was persevering in his theosophic course; and, at the same time, aiming at the construction of a system which would complete his own past philosophical development and supplant Hegelianism, which reigned without a rival during the whole period of his retirement. In 1841—ten years after Hegel's death, and in the 67th year of his own age—he was induced to leave Munich for Berlin, to attack Hegelianism in its stronghold, and to expound the results of his long-continued and carefully-concealed meditations. The moment was opportune; for dissension had already begun to reign in the Hegelian camp, and impartial judges had already begun to see that the history of philosophy was not to end with Hegel, while no one had appeared to replace him. I must not speak of the immense excitement caused by Schelling's presence in the Prussian capital, of the enthusiasm or the envy, of the hopes which were only imperfectly fulfilled or the hostilities not to be justified. He died on the 20th of August 1854. We have now ample materials for the knowledge of the last phase of his philosophy—that which he brooded over so long—in the four volumes which compose the second division of his collected works.[1] The few brief and general remarks which I have to

[1] There is a careful account of the positive philosophy of Schelling by Eggel—"Schelling's Philosophy of Revelation"—in the first vol. of the 'Studien und Kritiken' for 1863; and a still better by Professor H. Beckers of Munich—"On the Significance of the Schellingian Metaphysics; a contribution to the deeper understanding of Schelling's doctrine of potences or principles"—in vol. ix. of the 'Abh. d. Bay. Akad. d. Wiss.' E. von. Hartmann has pointed out very ingeniously the resemblances and differences between this system on the one hand, and those of Hegel and Schopenhauer on the other, in an essay published in the 'Philosophische Monatshefte' (and also separately) in 1869, under the

make on the system expounded in these volumes are intended merely to indicate its relation to the philosophy of history.

It was, then, as I have said, a system which Schelling meant should continue and complete his past philosophical development. It was not to contradict or exclude the philosophy of nature or of identity, but to take them up into itself and to supply what they wanted. His previous philosophy, he held, was true, so far as it went; but it did not go more than half-way towards an explanation of the universe. It was a purely rational philosophy, and consequently a merely negative philosophy, capable only of explaining the logical relations of things, and necessarily leaving out of account the real in them. From overlooking this circumstance, Hegel, according to Schelling, had involved himself in errors without number, and brought philosophy into the most grievous position. Being a man of merely mechanical intellect without originality or genius, after having borrowed the principles which he (Schelling) had discovered, he had toiled laboriously at the task of elaborating them into a complete philosophy, not seeing that no mere philosophy of thought could be complete. Hence, attempting the impossible, he had often been compelled to abandon pure thought for arbitrary imaginations, and to have recourse to strange shifts and downright sophistry to conceal his failures. Hence his system was partly a plagiarism and partly a caricature, and at the most a mere episode in the history of speculation. The evil it had done, Schelling undertook to remove and remedy, by supplying the necessary complement to his own past or negative philosophy, a positive philosophy—one which, when conjoined with the other, would constitute the complete and absolute truth; for whereas the negative philosophy, starting from reason, and proceeding solely according to the necessary laws of reason, could reach only, so far as existence is concerned, since reason cannot create reality, a negative result—God merely in idea—this positive philosophy starting with what the negative

title of "Schelling's Positive Philosophy as Unity of Hegel and Schopenhauer." There is no evidence that Schelling borrowed from Schopenhauer. That he was greatly influenced by Baader has been amply and repeatedly shown by Professor Fr. Hoffmann.

philosophy had led up to without being able to lay hold of and secure—viz., primordial and transcendental Being, which is in the last and highest instance Will,[1] would proceed as the philosophy of will as well as of thought to incorporate and genetically explain, not merely sensuous experience, but experience as a whole; to receive an actual and active God, the Lord of all Being, as its object; and to follow religion through all its phases, both in its complete and incomplete form—or, in other words, both as mythology and revelation. Accordingly, more even than the Hegelian philosophy, it claims to be an historical philosophy It represents the universe as a process which is actual and not merely logical, which is free as well as necessary; or, in other words, as a history carried on in and by God. It does so with an ability and ingenuity, a wealth of learning and a suggestiveness, which have not generally, I think, received justice, but also with extreme rashness and fancifulness. In the history of religious philosophy, and in the philosophy of religious history, it will always be entitled to occupy a prominent place. No philosophy has ever assigned to religious history equal importance. It seeks its confirmation at every step in the religious consciousness of humanity, and strives to teach us to understand the history of that consciousness according to its inward essence and ultimate principles. At the same time, it is very far from being a philosophy of history, or even from including a philosophy of history, in any usual or proper sense of the expression; and I may not venture to do more than to indicate in the briefest manner what materials for reflection the historical theorist has to look for in the four volumes devoted to the exposition of the last or positive phase of Schelling's philosophy.

The first volume consists of two books,—the former of which is an "Historical and Critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology," and the latter, an "Exposition of the Rational Philosophy." The Introduction to Mythology consists of ten lectures delivered by Schelling in the last years of his residence at

[1] The agreement between Schelling and Schopenhauer as to the place of the Will in philosophy is the root of almost all the other resemblances which their systems bear to each other.

Munich and the first years of his residence at Berlin. They describe and criticise the various modes in which mythology had previously been treated, exhibiting with great clearness and ingenuity wherein they had failed, and in a fair and even generous spirit what they had accomplished. They show that Schelling had carefully read and deeply studied all that was most worth reading on the subject of mythology, and had formed his own conclusions slowly and laboriously. They are remarkably rich in suggestions of new problems, in questions previously unasked; and Schelling was not mistaken in thinking that to propose new problems is often more serviceable to science than to solve old and recognised difficulties. Now the development of mythology is itself an historical fact of a magnitude and importance which can scarcely be exaggerated; and all attempts to explain this fact—that is to say, all philosophies of mythology—fall immediately within the scope of the philosophy of history. They are all more or less successful solutions of some of the most obscure but also most momentous of historical problems. A critical account of these attempts, so learned, so ingenious, so profoundly suggestive, and so generally just, as that of Schelling, must accordingly be of no slight value to the historical philosopher, whatever may be the merits or demerits of the particular theory explicitly maintained or tacitly implied to be true.

He critically rejects the opinion that mythology is poetry (or has no truth in it), and all forms of the theory that it is allegory (has truth in it, but not in it as such), whether Euhemeristic, moral, or physical, as well as the cosmogonical or philosophical interpretation proposed by Heyne, and the philosophico-philological by Hermann; he maintains that mythology is no invention either of individuals or nations, but true as such, as religious reality and experience, as a doctrine and history of the gods; and, to bring out the full meaning of this position, subjects the views of Hume, Voss, Creuzer, &c., to a searching scrutiny, especially signalising the labours of Creuzer as having historically proved that the various forms of polytheism had been developed out of a primitive monotheistic religion. He further argues that the division of speech and rise of nations

were not the causes of, but due to the transition from, primitive monotheism to polytheism, and that mythology is a necessary theogonic process, in which, with the gradual development of the doctrine of the gods, peoples and languages arose in regular order. The substance of his reasoning on the origin of nations has been reproduced by Professor Max Müller in a better and briefer form than I could attain, and I shall avail myself of what he has written. "It was Schelling, one of the profoundest thinkers of Germany, who first (?) asked the question, What makes an ethnos? What is the true origin of a people? How did human beings become a people? And the answer which he gave, though it sounded startling to me when, in 1845, I listened at Berlin to the lectures of the old philosopher, has been confirmed more and more by subsequent researches into the history of language and religion. To say that man is a gregarious animal, and that, like swarms of bees, or herds of wild elephants, men keep together instinctively, and thus form themselves into a people, is saying very little. It might explain the agglomeration of one large flock of human beings, but it would never explain the formation of individual peoples. Nor should we advance much towards a solution of our problem if we were told that men break up into peoples as bees break up into swarms, by following different queens, by owing allegiance to different governments. Allegiance to the same government, particularly in ancient times, is the result rather than the cause of nationality; while in historical times, such has been the confusion produced by extraneous influences —by brute force or dynastic combinations—that the natural development of peoples has been entirely arrested, and we frequently find one and the same people divided by different governments, and different peoples united under the same ruler. Our question, what makes a people? has to be considered in reference to the most ancient times. How did men form themselves into a people before there were kings or shepherds of men? Was it through community of blood? I doubt it. Community of blood produces families, clans, possibly races; but it does not produce that higher and purely moral feeling which binds men together and makes them a people.

It is language and religion that make a people; but religion is even a more powerful agent than language. The languages of many of the aboriginal inhabitants of Northern America are but dialectic varieties of one type, but those who spoke these dialects have never coalesced into a people. They remained mere clans or wandering tribes; they never knew the feeling of a nation, because they never knew the feeling of worshipping the same gods. The Greeks, on the contrary, though speaking their strongly marked, and I doubt whether mutually intelligible dialects, the Æolic, the Doric, the Ionic, felt themselves at all times, even when ruled by different tyrants, or broken up into numerous republics, as one great Hellenic people. What was it, then, that preserved in their hearts, in spite of dialects, in spite of dynasties, in spite even of the feuds of tribes and the jealousies of states, the deep feeling of that ideal unity which constitutes a people? It was their primitive religion; it was a dim recollection of the common allegiance they owed from time immemorial to the great father of gods and men; it was their belief in the old Zeus of Dodona, the Panhellenic Zeus. Perhaps the most signal confirmation of this view, that it is religion even more than language which supplies the foundation of nationality, is to be found in the history of the Jews, the chosen people of God. The language of the Jews differed from that of the Phœnicians, the Moabites, and other neighbouring tribes, much less than the Greek dialects differed from each other. But the worship of Jehovah made the Jews a peculiar people, the people of Jehovah, separated by their God, though not by their language, from the people of Chemosh (the Moabites), and from the worshippers of Baal and Ashtaroth. It was their faith in Jehovah that changed the wandering tribes of Israel into a nation. 'A people,' as Schelling says, 'exists only when it has determined itself with regard to its mythology. This mythology, therefore, cannot take its origin after a national separation has take place, after a people has become a people; nor could it spring up while a people was still contained, as an invisible part, in the whole of humanity; but its origin must be referred to that very period of transition before a people has assumed its definite existence, and when it is on the point of

separating and constituting itself. The same applies to the language of a people; it becomes definite at the same time that a people becomes definite.'"[1] The historical speculation which Max Müller thus skilfully condenses will be found by those who turn to the pages of Schelling himself to have been presented by him with remarkable ingenuity and ability. Its elaboration and advocacy are both admirable; scarcely anything has been left undone which was needed to produce conviction of its truth. Whether it has been conclusively established or not, however, is a question which I shall leave for consideration until I come to treat specially (in my concluding volume) of the relation of mythology and philosophies of mythology to the science of history.

In the last lecture of the Introduction, Schelling himself treats of the connection between the philosophy of mythology and the philosophy of history. His views on the subject may be thus summarised. What the science or philosophy of history is has not yet been clearly apprehended by any one. There can, indeed, be no philosophy of history unless history itself is a whole—unless, that is to say, it is bounded, or has a beginning and an end; and no philosophy of history has as yet shown itself able to assign to history either beginning or end. The philosophy of mythology is the first system which has succeeded in distinguishing historical time from antecedent time, and consequently in fixing its commencement. The distinction of time into historical and prehistorical time is insufficient, because, as commonly understood, it is not a real distinction, does not signify that there is any essential or inherent difference between these two portions of time, but merely that we have less knowledge of the one than of the other, that records are wanting in regard to the one which are to be found in regard to the other. History thus going back altogether indefinitely, divisions of its course into epochs according to formulæ like that of Hegel must be futile; and, in fact, any true comprehension of it must be impossible. A sufficiently profound study of mythology, however, solves the difficulty, by showing that historical time begins with the completed separa-

[1] Introduction to the Science of Religion, 145-149.

tion of peoples, and that prehistorical time is the period during which their separation is taking place, during which the transition from primitive monotheism to polytheism is occurring. The content of prehistorical time is mythology itself—a necessary theogonic process; the content of historical time is a succession of free facts and events of a more external and worldly character. Historical time is thus really and essentially separated from prehistorical time, and instead of going indefinitely back into the past, has a distinct commencement. Prehistorical time itself is similarly preceded by a time essentially different from it—the time of the primitive, undivided, and unaltered monotheism, a time of complete historical immobility, when every day was like every other. This last may be called absolute prehistorical time; while that in which mythological results are realised, and in which a real progress or history takes place, although it be one essentially different from that with which we are familiar, may be distinguished from it by the designation of relative historical time. The time in which history is included is thus an organic system with parts or members distinctly differentiated from one another; and the philosophy of mythology is, if history be taken in the widest sense, simply the first and most indispensable part of a philosophy of history. If its problems can be solved, a new and brilliant light must be cast upon the whole course and purpose of human development, since all historical speculations and researches lead back to the obscure region which is its province—the χρόνος ἄδηλος.

The second book of the first volume—the "Exposition of the Rational Philosophy"—consists of fourteen lectures which were never delivered from the professorial chair, and which, indeed, were written only shortly before their author's death. It is an exposition of the possibilities which reason finds to be necessarily involved in the notion of *being* (exclusive of the affirmation of existence), and as these possibilities underlie and condition reality, it may be regarded as the foundation of the Positive Philosophy. It is consequently of prime importance for the understanding of the last phase of Schelling's general philosophy; but it contains exceedingly little which can be said to belong in any sense or form to a philosophy of history,—nothing, indeed,

except the curious argumentation in lecture twenty-one, which endeavours to reconcile belief in the plurality of human species with belief in human unity, through the hypothesis of the species having a common relation to a man who was himself of no species, but a true, typical, and exclusively individual man; and the reasons given in lecture twenty-three for holding that the State is not a product but a condition of freedom; that its origin is to be sought not in a contract but in the natural extension of the authority exercised by the father of a family; that its diversity of forms is the necessary consequence of its varying relations to society; that it is a means and not an end (a truth which Christianity first made manifest); and that even the most perfect State cannot be the final cause of history.

The first book of the second volume, consisting of six lectures on Monotheism, contains as little properly historical speculation as that of which I have just spoken. It compares and contrasts the idea of monotheism with the ideas of abstract theism and of pantheism. It endeavours to show that abstract theism is an empty and inconsistent notion, which must logically issue either in dualism or pantheism; that pantheism is a defective and superficial notion, which confounds a mere moment or stage of the existence of Deity with His whole or perfect existence; and that true monotheism supplants and overcomes pantheism by including it while showing its insufficiency, by distinguishing what in God is God from what in God is not God. How this is done,—how Schelling distinguishes in God an eternal ground or nature which is in itself dark and unintelligent, three moments or potences, and three persons—the Father, Son, and Spirit—which proceed from the three potences in the process by which the Divine Mind displays itself in ruling creatively over its nature,—I must leave unexplained; as also how the existence of an archetypal, premundane, and immanently divine world is accounted for by the co-operation of the potences and the existence of the actual world of experience by their separation and conflict. Suffice it to say that the entire theogonic process in creation is held to have found its consummation in man, and that he is described as the unity and product of the divine potences. In creation, these potences, having issued separately

from the absolute existence, appeared in antagonism; but in man they are combined and reconciled, and in him God at once completes and harmonises nature and produces an express image of Himself. Like God, man is free; he has within him a certain degree of creative power; and the desire arises within him to exercise his power as his own, to exist and act in and for himself. He yields to this desire, and by so doing loses dominion over himself and over the potences within him. These by this fall are again separated and cast into conflict and begin a new creative process, the mythological process, analogous to that which generated the first creation, although it takes place not in the bosom of God but of man. The same potences which successively appeared in the first creation rise and rule in the same order in the second creation, and require again to be reconciled. The history of consciousness thus repeats that of the world. Mythology is an ideal reproduction of cosmogony. This is why so many have supposed it to be a disguised physical philosophy.

In the following book, which consists of twenty-two lectures, we have a detailed exposition of the mythological process itself. The starting-point is represented as having been an imperfect kind of monotheism, in which God was thought of as one only, because others had not yet presented themselves to the mind; and not as involving a negation of more than one, not as excluding plurality. Had it been true monotheism, the whole series of mythologies could only be thought of as the stages of a process admitting neither of rational explanation nor of moral justification. It must have been a monotheism of which polytheism was not the contradiction but the natural development. True monotheism is not to be sought for at the beginning but at the end of the mythological process. That process, as has been said, takes place in consciousness. It is not, however, a mere process of consciousness, the moments of which are simply phases of consciousness, or stages of knowledge or faith, but a process through which consciousness must necessarily pass in virtue of coming under the sway of the succession of real powers, divine potences. The history of the gods is thus, according to Schelling, not merely a subjective but an objective

history, the key of which is to be found, not in men's imagination, feelings, conjectures, but in the nature of the Absolute Being. Around this thought he combines, with amazing ingenuity and a most learned industry, into one vast system, prehistoric Sabaism, the creed and constitution of China, the worships of Babylon, Persia, and Arabia, and the mythologies of Phœnicia, Egypt, India, and Greece, everywhere "in the strange play of fabling fancy hearing the oracular voice of primal Being, and in the poem wove by human thought tracing the image of the eternal God."

The last two volumes expound "the philosophy of revelation." The third volume introduces the subject,—its first book treating of the relation of the negative and positive philosophies, and the second of the relation of the philosophy of mythology to the philosophy of revelation. The revelation is not to be comprehended without the mythology, which is the gradual process of development by which the revelation is introduced and prepared. Consciousness, which is at first absolutely in the grasp of the potences, and moves under their impulse or attraction without intelligence or choice, is slowly set free, and learns to reason and doubt, to set itself over against its objects, and to take account both of them and of itself. In the Greek mythology the whole mythological process is repeated, reproduced, summed up, but its gods no longer despotically rule the mind; and when in the Greek mysteries the history of these gods is converted into a subject of philosophical contemplation, mythology begins to transcend itself in comprehending itself, and the deliverance of the spirit from the grasp of the potences, with the subjection instead of nature to spirit, is accomplished. The consideration of the Grecian mysteries is therefore the most suitable introduction to the philosophy of revelation. That philosophy, as expounded in the fourth volume, has for its special task to explain, by means of the principles brought to light in the philosophy of mythology, the person and work of Christ. His pre-existence in heathendom and Judaism as the second potence or Logos, whose work it is to control, subdue, and reorganise the second potence or nature until it is perfectly conformed to the Father's will, is insisted upon; Christianity is

represented as the unity of Judaism and heathendom, yet as possessed of a truly supernatural or revealed content which reason cannot apprehend *a priori*, but must receive from a self-denying faith in order to comprehend; and the development of the Church founded on the life, doctrine, and death of Christ, and ruled by the Spirit, is described as proceeding from within in a course which presents an image and reflex of internal history, as having for goal the perfect redemption of all things from sin, and their perfect restoration to God, and as passing through three epochs or ages—that of negative unity, that of division, and that of positive unity—which were prefigured by the apostles Peter, Paul, and John; Peter being the representative of the Catholic Church, Paul of the Protestant Church, and John of the Christianity of the future.

The "positive" philosophy of Schelling thus sought to take up into itself at once all religion and all history. It regarded religion as the essential content or substance of history, and aimed at being the philosophy of history through being the philosophy of religion. While looking upon history as—to use the words of Chalybäus—"not confined within the usual limits of the historical, but stretching from the beginning to the end, from eternity to eternity," it yet found it to divide, according to the inherent character of the religious process which pervades and constitutes it, into two great periods—the ante-Christian and the post-Christian—and each of these periods into three chief epochs. The philosophy of mythology was consequently for Schelling, at the close of his career, the philosophy of history before Christ; the philosophy of revelation that of history after Christ; and the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of history blended into one.

I may have dwelt too long on a philosophy of history of so peculiar a character as the positive philosophy of Schelling, and I shall leave it entirely to the reader himself to judge of its worth, only remarking, that it has exerted a considerable power on theological speculation in Germany; that one French work, at least, of genuine ability—the 'Philosophie de la Liberté' of M. Charles Secrétan—bears profound traces of its influence; that one of the most distinguished students of the sciences of

language and religion, Professor Max Müller, has warmly acknowledged his obligations to it; and that that great scholar and noble-natured man, Baron Bunsen, whose historical philosophy falls next to be considered by us, was one of those who valued it at the highest, although he never accepted it as a whole, nor attempted to imitate the bolder flights of its illustrious author.

"A narrower sphere was mine: to look into
The human soul, and on a lower path
Follow thy lofty march; with reverent ear
Catch up the hoary echoes of the tale
Of human fates, and from the law of growing
Spell out the meaning of the finished growth;
The fragments of the primal human speech
From Asia scattered to the land of Nile,
The rigid stony lines in mystery veiled,
Quaint hieroglyphics of the soul, whence sprang
Light in long centuries, and religious hope
To a deep-brooding people, and the awe,
Mother of wisdom, which in soul and nature
Felt the full Godhead—all that sacred lore
Which filled with wonder and with pious fear
The wise of Hellas, folly later deemed
By the cold scoffers of barbaric Rome,
Of this somewhat to me the Muse revealed,
That I one arm of Time's far-stretching sea
Might know, one ring upon the jewelled hand
Of Truth might touch; and what she showed to me,
The primal deed and thought of men, behold,
I dedicate to thee. Would that thy soul
Might find itself in what is no less thine
Than mine; and, from the larger field displayed,
Tempt a new flight o'er larger realms of thought!" [1]

II.

No man, perhaps, if we except only the wise and good Prince who long lived among us a blameless and beautiful life full in the "fierce light that beats around a throne," has done so much to strengthen the union between Great Britain and Germany as Baron Christian-Charles-Josiah Bunsen (1791-1860); and the incidents of his career are probably as well known, his writings as much studied, and his memory as revered, in this country as

[1] From the "Dedication to Schelling," prefixed by Bunsen to the fourth volume of 'Egypt's Place in Universal History,' and translated by C. H. Cottrell.

in his native land. It will suffice, therefore, simply to refer those who wish for biographical details to the Memoir by his widow—one of those works which, as Max Müller has finely said, "have all the importance of an Ecce Homo, showing to the world what men can be, and permanently raising the ideal of human life."

Bunsen's 'God in History, or the Progress of Faith in a Moral Order of the World' (1857-59), although the last work he completed, was one of the first which he conceived. The thought which is central in it was that which was central in his life; was the thought which gave vitality and unity to all his intellectual labours, manifold as they were—which directed, almost from childhood until death, the faculties of his singularly perfect mind, and shaped the purposes of his singularly pure and aspiring soul,—"the thought sublime" planted

> "Deep in the holiest-holy of his heart,
> That he might well employ
> His strength upon God's praise,
> Catching some far ken of His glorious ways
> Through the long march of the uncounted days;"[1]

the thought to which he gave solemn expression in a prayer written in his twenty-fifth year, a few days after his marriage: "Eternal, omnipresent God, enlighten me with Thy Holy Spirit, and fill me with Thy heavenly light. What in childhood I felt and yearned after, what throughout the years of youth grew clearer and clearer before my soul, I will now venture to hold fast, to examine, to represent. The revelation of Thee in man's energies and efforts, Thy firm path through the stream of ages, I long to trace and recognise, as far as may be permitted to me, even in this body of earth. The song of praise to Thee from the whole of humanity, in times far and near—the pains and lamentations of earth, and their consolation in Thee—I wish to take in clear and unhindered. Do Thou send me Thy Spirit of truth, that I may behold things earthly as they are, without veil and without mask, without human trappings and empty adornment, and that in the silent peace of truth I may feel and recognise Thee." The plan of life-study which he had

[1] From the characteristically admirable translation of Professor J. S. Blackie. See Memoir, i. 32.

laid before Niebuhr in the previous year shows how wide and precise, even at that time, were his views as to the method in which he ought to seek the realisation of his purpose—how well he was aware that his end could only be reached through a combination of the resources of philology, history, and philosophy, far more accurate and elaborate than had ever up to that time been attempted. His 'Egypt's Place in Universal History,' his various treatises in the department of ecclesiastical history, his liturgical collections, his linguistic essays, his Bibelwerk, &c., may be regarded as so many parts of a whole, which was never completely evolved from the ideal germ there delineated. The "philosophical aphorisms" in the first edition of 'Hippolytus and his Age;' the two volumes of 'Outlines of the Philosophy of Universal History applied to Language and Religion,' into which these aphorisms were expanded in 'Christianity and Mankind;' and the three-volumed work 'God in History,' may be regarded as successive stages in the development of the idea itself,—the last being the most perfect, and that in which it will be proper for us here to consider it. Of course it is only with the leading principles of the book that we are concerned; and as Bunsen has himself presented these principles in a connected form in the 'General Philosophical Introduction,' our task is, in this case, much easier than usual.

The argumentation of Bunsen is, then, to the following effect. The universe is to philosophers, if we consider only what is essential in their systems, ever one of two things—either a product of accident or an embodiment of thought. If the former, their view of the universe is atheistical or godless, and leaves no room for the existence of a power of moral determination; it necessarily involves not only the denial of the divine presence and thought in creation, but the denial also of a moral law and order in history: if the latter, their view is theistic; it assumes that a creative idea unifies and pervades all the varieties of phenomena. The theistic view includes, however, two doctrines, and even two contradictory doctrines — viz., deism, and what is loosely called pantheism. Deism, while representing God as the cause of the world and of man, separates both from Him by an infinite chasm, and regards Him as

existing wholly apart from, and in unconditional antithesis to, the development in space and time, nature and history. Pantheism, strictly so called, overlooks that God has a substantive, self-active, conscious being, which transcends all space and time, and identifies Him with the whole of things filling space and happening in time. In this form it satisfies neither reason nor conscience. But the term pantheism is often used to designate the doctrine that God, although the eternal, unchanging, self-adequate Reason and Will, yet lives and works continually in nature and history, only with the difference of the finite and the infinite. And this, says Bunsen, is alone the truth.

In order to discover how God lives and works in humanity—in order to discover law in the succession of events—philosophy is indispensable; for without its aid we cannot determine in what progress consists, or where it is to be found, nor separate what is essential in the facts from what is accidental; but it can only succeed if organically combined with philology and history. "The principle of the progress of humanity necessarily has its root in the law of divine self-manifestation. It is the highest object of the philosophical theory of mankind to exhibit this law. But the solution of this problem in a concrete form supposes a methodical organic union of three distinct operations. The first is the philosophical or speculative, as to the leading principles and general method. The second is the philological, for sifting and previously organising the facts contained in the historical records, of which language is not only the vehicle, but itself the principle and primitive monument. The third is the historical, which organises these facts definitively, according to the principle of development." The modern German school, Bunsen thinks, was the first to propound, with a clear consciousness of what they implied, these questions, Is there such a thing as progress in the history of the human race? If so, wherein is it visible? What is its formula? "To find a true and positive, not negative, solution of the problem of the philosophy of history, may be said to have formed, and to continue to form, consciously and unconsciously, the ultimate object of that great effort of the German mind which has produced Goethe and Schiller in literature; Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel in

philosophy; Lessing, Schlegel, and Niebuhr in criticism and historical research." This end is one which can only be attained if we start from the assumption of a moral order of the world and the essential unity of the human race, and follow a method neither purely speculative nor purely historical, as the former does not bring us into contact with the actual facts, and the latter does not show us the law of their development. The German and the English modes of procedure require to be united. The German philosophy of mind must be applied to historical realities; and no other method will avail than that which is fundamentally Baconian. The laws of evolution must be sought for in the historical phenomena lying before us, by a gradual process of analysis and synthesis of our materials; but they cannot in themselves be in essence anything but an application of the universal reason and the universal conscience to the great world-wide facts of man's consciousness of God in history.

Our author is thus led to treat next of the self-consciousness and the God-consciousness, and to insist on what may, perhaps, be regarded as the central principle of his historical philosophy,—viz., that man's consciousness of God is the prime and constant motive force in the history of nations—the vital breath of the progress of the human race towards truth and justice—the original instinct of humanity, which, unfolding itself progressively from the unconscious to the conscious, gives rise to all language, political arrangements, and culture. Humanity is not merely the aggregate of individuals, for it has a principle of evolution of its own, and advances according to the idea divinely placed within it, yet it advances only through the instrumentality of individuals. "Personality is the lever of the world's history." Just as the phenomena of the consciousness of God develop themselves in humanity in an organic series, so the various individuals who from time to time have imparted fresh life to the race form a progressive series. "History has been fruitful of good only in so far as it has been the result of the harmonious action and reaction of two poles, the life of the individual and of the community. The consciousness of the race resides only in individuals, but resides in them in propor-

tion as the true collective consciousness of mankind at large is revealed in them. All that is great takes its rise from the individual, but only in so far as he offers up his individual self to the whole." The process of historical development is also characterised by the action and reaction, the co-operation and antagonism, of intuition and reflection, of popular religious consciousness and philosophical religious investigation. A threefold division of history into epochs is determined by the relation of these two things to each other; the first epoch being that of the formation of language and myths: the second, that of the formation of nations, science, and art, where individuality is in conflict with common intuition; and the third, that of the reconciliation of reflection with faith through science and art—or of the unity of the good, true, and beautiful.

Bunsen proceeds to insist that the antithesis between thought and will—the contrast between the preponderance of the intellectual or of the practical side of human nature—is conspicuous in the development of nations. The religious consciousness not only gives rise to knowledge, arts, letters, and science, but manifests itself in the life of society, and in the State as the supreme organised and legal society. "It will not be contested," he says, "that the ideal of this consciousness has found its three great historical depositaries in three nationalities: in the Hebrews during the earliest epoch; in the Hellenes during the second; in the Germans during the third. But it is likewise an historical fact, that in each of these three epochs, these three depositaries of the leading thoughts of mankind have been confronted by three great historical representatives of action. Side by side with the Semitic Hebrews, advance, through the successive stages of their national development, the Zoroastrian Iranians—first as Bactrians, then as Medes and Persians. Semitism, for the first time, takes the shape predominantly of action in that offshoot of Semitic intuition, the world-conquering Arabian Mohammedanism. By the side of the Hellenes, with their intellectual creativeness, and their devotion to liberty, stand the Romans, with their genius for legal organisation and for universal government. Finally, by the side of the Germans, we behold, first, the cognate Romanic races, and then the

kindred English. On this subject another remarkable fact immediately forces itself on the eye. All the chosen vessels of *thought* have been federal nations—all the chosen vessels of *act* have been nations of a single polity; in accordance with a law of universal history which will find its full accomplishment only in the true federal state."

In concluding his 'General Philosophical Introduction,' Bunsen gives an outline of the rest of his work. "Our second book will exhibit the leading features of the religious consciousness of the Hebrews; the third will be chiefly devoted to that of the pre-Christian Aryans of Eastern Asia, introduced by a survey of their precursors in the primitive Asiatic world—the Egyptians, Turanians, and Chinese; the fourth, to that of the pre-Christian Aryans in Asia Minor and Europe, including the Hellenes, the Romans, and the Teutons. In the fifth book, we shall consider the religious consciousness of the Christian Aryans; and in the sixth, take a general retrospect of the results to which our investigations have conducted us. In our historical surveys we shall, as far as possible, adopt the following method. Our delineation of each national type of religious consciousness will begin with *the popular intuition* of the Kosmos, and end (so far as this point may, in fact, be reached in the particular instance) with *the philosophical speculation.* But between these two comes the consideration of the political institutions, the artistic creations, and the cultivated literature, whether that of speculation, poetry, or prose." The work is not meant, Bunsen distinctly explains, to be a philosophy of universal history on the principles he has stated. The philosophy of history must be both more and less than the historical elucidation of the course of man's religious consciousness. It must be "more, in so far as, starting from the highest point on which the foot can be planted, its task is to discover and exhibit the universal laws that regulate the unfolding of man's nature, and to demonstrate their application not alone to religion, but also to language, art, science, and politics; and less, in so far as it is not its task to enter into the historical delineation of the leading personages and ideas with which the history of man's religious consciousness has to concern itself."

While, then, Bunsen believed that in the Introduction, which I have summarised, he had exhibited the principles and plan of a philosophy of history, he was fully aware that in the work itself—the actual exposition of the growth of the religious consciousness—he had not wrought out such a philosophy. He did not mean his book to be a philosophy of history; and we must not find fault with it for being only what it was meant to be. At the same time, he believed he was doing much more than merely tracing the history of a special phase of human development. The religious consciousness seemed to him to be not merely one among a number of co-ordinate historical forces, but the central, regulative, and even creative, principle of history, the objective truth corresponding to it being nothing less than the divinity manifesting and incarnating itself in humanity. The development of the religious consciousness—of faith in a divine moral presence and order,—necessarily, he held, involved, impelled, and directed—necessarily gave law and aim to—progress in every other sphere, whether of truth, beauty, or goodness; or, in other words, whether in science, art, or moral and political achievement. To trace the history of the religious consciousness of mankind from nation to nation, was therefore, in his eyes, to approximate somewhat closely to an exposition of the philosophy of history. As to the way in which he has traced its history and described its various phases—the organic series of its phenomena presented in the faith and worship of the chief peoples of the world—it is scarcely necessary to say that there is much that is admirable,—largeness of conception, devoutness of spirit, openness to truth, a wide and ready sympathy with all that is good, critical boldness, fertility of suggestion and invention, and an intellectual acquisitiveness of gigantic reach. It must also, however, I fear, be said, that it is far from a faultless way. His work is certainly, with all its merits, far from a perfect work. Even as to research and the statement of facts, it is most unequal; and the thinking, in many places so fresh and true, is in others troubled and capricious, and at times is lost altogether in the most barren metaphysical phraseology, as a stream is dried up in a desert. A pantheistic taint makes itself widely felt. And mere con-

jectures are too often presented as the definitively ascertained results of critical and historical investigation.

It was perhaps the chief merit of Bunsen in connection with historical science, to have seen so clearly the necessity of the combined and methodical application of history, philology, and philosophy in order to solve its leading problems; and in particular, to have realised so fully the power and significance of comparative philology as an instrument of historical investigation. Endowed in a high degree with the linguistic faculty—early conversant with the results of the wonderful series of linguistic researches which had been carried on by an unbroken succession of inquirers from Leibnitz to W. von Humboldt—skilled in many of the varieties of human speech, and knowing a good deal about almost all,—he recognised, with a comprehensiveness and distinctness which had never before been equalled, that language, properly studied, would yield a harvest of historical results of extreme richness and interest; that it was itself a far older, more trustworthy, and more important historical record than anything written in it; and would, were it submitted to a true method of investigation, disclose epochs of intellectual and creative life which must otherwise have remained impenetrably concealed. And he was not content either to allow the conviction to lie barren in his mind or to give it a mere general expression in words; but he devoted long years of earnest toil to the study of the languages of Egypt, Asia, and Europe, and called in to his help the abilities of younger and less multifariously burdened men, such as Max Müller, Aufrecht, Charles Meyer, Lepsius, &c., expressly in order that he might prove that in the successive deposits of speech there have been preserved strata of mental existence, many of which are far older than any written or monumental records, yet which are "as well defined as those of geology, and infinitely more intelligible, because intellectual themselves, and carrying in themselves their order of succession by their own law of development." His marvellous enthusiasm and industry could not have been better employed than they were, even although they may not at all points have been rewarded with complete success, in attempting to show, by the comparison and analysis of the

forms of human speech, that language has had but one principle of formation and law of growth; that its fundamental unity establishes what our religious records postulate,—viz., that the human race is of one kindred, one descent, and that human civilisation is an organic whole, not a patchwork of incoherent fragments, not "an inorganic complex of various developments, starting from numberless beginnings, flowing in isolated beds, and destined only to disappear and make room for others, running the same course in monotonous rotation"; that its origin can be explained neither by an exclusive materialism nor an exclusive spiritualism, while it presupposes the priority of thought to matter, the action of intellect on sense; that from the first it was a product of reason and no mere imitation of natural sounds or utterance of joy or grief, desire or fear; and that its course of evolution has been a reproduction and continuation of that creation, proceeding from the inorganic to the organic, and within the organic from unconsciousness and vague generality to consciousness and individuality. The languages of the primitive formation—monosyllabic languages, like the Chinese—he has represented, as decidedly inorganic, each word implicitly containing the power of a complete phrase in itself, so that thought is, as it were, confined and pulverised in the separate inert molecules which compose the vocabulary; those of the secondary formation—the agglutinative, or Turanian languages—as exhibiting peculiarities analogous to the characteristics distinctive of the incomplete organisation of vegetables; and the inflected languages, whether Semitic or Iranian, as completely and spiritually organised. Such is, perhaps, the thread of thought which connects all the linguistic researches in his 'Egypt's Place in Universal History' and his 'Christianity and Mankind.' These researches had consequently a common aim, and that one of the grandest which could be conceived. That they were in the main but the work of a pioneer, Bunsen himself was fully aware; that they have cleared ways for others into vast regions which had not unnaturally been believed inaccessible, can no more be reasonably doubted, than that they display magnificent powers both of conception and execution can be fairly denied.

Comprehensive as were Bunsen's views of the method of historical philosophy, they were not comprehensive enough. He regarded man too exclusively as a spiritual being, and gave insufficient attention to his physical nature and its relationships; he studied him merely as language and religion show him to be, and overlooked what geology, biology, and, in particular, ethnology, have to tell concerning him. He was quite correct in thinking that in language and religion we may find memorials of a period in human history long prior to the existence of the simplest written records; but the assumption that we have in them absolutely the oldest historical monuments, and that they together even tell us all that is to be known of the primeval life of man—an assumption which certainly underlies Bunsen's reasoning—is obviously unwarranted. It is indubitable that the earth has preserved in its stony tablets countless tiny and feeble creatures which lived millions of ages before man appeared on its surface; and there can be nothing, therefore, inherently improbable in supposing that it may have preserved traces of human agency older than any word or belief which comparative philology or the science of religions can discover. In fact, the problems of historical philosophy, as I shall in next volume carefully show, can only be solved by the combined and methodical application of the resources not of three but of all the sciences.

It will be sufficient merely to indicate as erroneous the notion of Baron Bunsen that the philosophy of history is a peculiarly German science, its problem having been first clearly and profoundly apprehended by the modern German school. That school neither apprehended the problem of the philosophy of history first nor clearly. This work ought to be itself, however, a sufficient proof that the philosophy of history, little advanced as it may as yet be, is no exclusively German achievement, but the product of the intellectual labours of at least the four most cultivated European nations during the last two centuries.

The least satisfactory portion of Bunsen's historical speculations is that which relates to the general laws of human development. The division of history into three epochs, of which the first was represented by the Hebrews and Zoroastrian

Iranians, the second by the Greeks and Romans, and the third by the Germans, the Romanic peoples, and the English; the attribution of speech and mythology to the first epoch, of poetry, statuary, and civil policy to the second, of science to the third; and the distribution of nations into intellectually creative and practically energetic—into vessels of thought and vessels of action—according as they are federal or unitive,—are all obviously grounded on the hastiest of inferences from some confused apprehension of a very few facts. Why should the Turanians and Khamites have been dropped out of account? Why the peoples who spoke the inorganic languages which preceded the organic? How were the Hebrews specially concerned in the formation either of language or mythology? Were the Hebrews, Phœnicians, and Arabs before Mohammed, decidedly inferior as regards energy of action to the Bactrians, Medes, and Persians? Were the Greeks not highly distinguished in almost every kind of action? Did Greece accomplish less even in science than Germany has yet done? Is the religious superiority of the third to the second epoch not as great as its scientific superiority? Is it quite certain that Germany has added more to the world's treasury of thought than France or England? Can Switzerland and the United States be justly described as vessels of thought but not of action? Bunsen overlooks all such questions, and leaps to his conclusions, regardless of all the rules and barriers of induction, with a rapidity and rashness which Fichte and Schelling themselves have seldom surpassed.

III.

The contributions of Ernst von Lasaulx[1] to the philosophy of history display a spirit in various respects kindred to that of Bunsen—profoundly religious yet most independent, extremely learned and a little fanciful, keenly susceptible to impressions from every phase of existence, and full of earnest moral aspirations. In one feature, however, the two men were very unlike. Bunsen was of a remarkably joyous and hopeful disposition, and

[1] As to his life and character, see 'Erinnerungen an Ernst von Lasaulx,' von Dr H. Holland. München, 1861.

amidst all the evils of the present never despaired of the future. He saw in history as much the realisation of the moral order of the world as in the physical universe the realisation of the laws of gravitation and of light: and he had the firmest confidence in the approach of a new period of social life based upon religion; in which the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of God, and the triumph of the divine principle upon earth is to be manifest and universal. A vein of melancholy, on the contrary, seems to have pervaded the nature of Lasaulx, and his historical associations are tinged with sadness and gloom. A vivid and painful consciousness of the conflict between the real and the ideal, and an intense perception of how much is vain and illusory in human affairs, have left their traces on his pages. He does not absolutely despair of the future; but he is so alive to the tragic side of existence, to those appearances of things which have given rise to all fatalistic and pessimistic theories, that he cherishes no high or steady hope of a noble and beautiful life being gradually realised by society on earth.

It may be said of him not less truly than of Bunsen, that the philosophy of history was the goal to which all his studies tended; and unfortunately, still more truly, that he has left only fragments of such a philosophy. Indeed, even these fragments refer chiefly to classical antiquity, the part of history with which he was most completely conversant, and by which he judged, perhaps, too much of all the rest. Most of them are to be found among the 'Abhandlungen der philosoph-philologischen Classe der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.' I may specially mention the essay on "The Geology of the Greeks and Romans, a contribution to the philosophy of history," in the sixth volume; that on "The History and Philosophy of Marriage among the Greeks," in the seventh volume; and that on "The Philosophy of Roman History," in the ninth volume. The lecture "On the Course of the Development of Greek and Roman Life, and on the Present State of German Life," was delivered before the Academy on the 25th of August 1847, but was published separately. The treatise, however, in which his general historical theory is most distinctly and comprehensively delineated, appeared in 1856, and is entitled 'Neuer Versuch einer

alten auf die Wahreit der Thatsachen gegründeten Philosophie der Geschichte.' These compositions are exceedingly attractive reading. The thoughts in them seem to well up without effort from the overflowing fulness of a richly-stored memory, a fresh and vigorous judgment, and a noble spiritual nature. In every page we feel the breath and motion of two currents of intellectual life, the classical and the romantic, conspiring and commingling as they have seldom done, yet without destroying the individuality of him in whom they met. It must be added, however, that we miss in his writings due development and systematic completeness of thought, accurate analysis either of facts or conceptions, and often adequate proof of the opinions enunciated.

I require to take Professor von Lasaulx's "New Essay" as the basis of my exposition of his theory. It is very characteristic to find that he begins it—not by endeavouring to determine what the philosophy of history is, or what its method is, or how it is related to other sciences, but—by laying down certain propositions—seven in number—as its presuppositions, with which, however, it has in reality only so far to do as it is capable of proving them. That history has its beginning and end in the unity of the creative love of God ; that it is an organism inclusive of manifold lesser organisms ; that it is related to the entire universe of spiritual beings ; that its course is governed by laws ; and that the greatest things in it have grown out of small and despised germs,—are statements which, so far as true, admit of historical proof, and the business of the philosophy of history is not to assume but to establish them. The first proposition affords a good example of how reckless in assumptions a man is apt to become when he has once persuaded himself that the assumption of principles is the legitimate and necessary commencement of science. "In the philosophy of history, as in every genuine science, and in all human life, the chief thing, and that which is decisive of everything else, is to proceed from God, and to treat Him as what is first, nature as what is second." Now, that God is first and nature second—that all truth proceeds from Him and tends to Him—is most certain ; but surely it does not necessitate the belief of any such folly and error

as that a chemist ought not to begin the study or teaching of chemistry either with chemical compounds or chemical elements, but with God.

Our author rests the possibility of the philosophy of history chiefly on two affirmations. The first is, that an objective understanding has impressed itself on things, and that the subjective understanding of man is capable of apprehending that objective understanding which belongs to God. It seems to me much more correct to say, that the subjective understanding of man is capable of tracing in outward things peculiarities of constitution and arrangement, which it is warranted, and even bound, to regard as the impressions of an objective understanding. When we state the truth thus, we see at once that science needs no theological presupposition. It starts from its appropriate facts—from experience—although it may end by showing that the facts are such that they must have originated in the Divine Mind. The second affirmation is, that so much of the history of modern Europe has already run that it is possible to see the lines of direction of the entire movement converging to a single end, and to draw a probable conclusion regarding the future from the past, founded on the analogy of the lives of modern nations to those of antiquity. It does not seem to me, however, that it is necessary to assume anything even in this respect. We know that a considerable portion of history has run, and in a particular course; and if we find that we can so far explain that history, and account for the course it has followed, we shall have a science of history, even although incapable of calculating or foreseeing the future of humanity, just as in geology we have a science of the history of the earth, however little it may be able to tell us about the future of the earth. A science may be real, so far as it goes, and yet necessarily very incomplete. It is, I may further observe, a marked defect in the historical generalisations of Lasaulx, that they rest so much on mere analogy, which can never afford more than probable evidence; that they almost invariably turn on parallelisms or resemblances of the kind, concerning which Bacon says that "they are, as it were, the first and lowest steps towards the union of nature, and do not immediately establish any

axiom, but merely indicate a certain relation of bodies to each other." He is far too ready to conclude that because modern history has been similar to classical history in certain particulars, it will be similar to them in others. In fact, it may be maintained that almost all the errors into which he has fallen spring from, or at least are closely associated with, his treating the histories of Greece and Rome as normal and typical histories—standards by which all other histories may be measured.

Lasaulx eloquently insists that the whole of humanity is to be regarded as a single man with one nature and life, one body and soul, one general will and reason; that each man is only man by virtue of being a member of the human race, or a son of man; that humanity unfolds itself into tribes and nations, each of which has a true individuality of character corresponding to that of its founder, and, in conformity with the laws of biology, passes, like universal humanity, from birth to death through the four stages of childhood, youth, manhood, and old age; that, in like manner, every organic creation of man, all languages, religions, arts, sciences, towns, states, and systems of states, gradually develop and exhaust the sum of vitality allotted to them, gradually grow and flourish until they have reached maturity, and then gradually decay and die; and that life diffuses itself from within outwards, from below upwards, but decay from without inwards, from above downwards—so that, as far as society is concerned, the course of its progress is in the ascending scale of peasant, citizen, soldier, priest, noble, and prince, while that of its dissolution is in the reverse order. He approves of Bacon's remark, that "in the youth of a state arms do flourish, in the middle age of a state learning, and then both of them together for a time; in the declining age of a state mechanical arts and merchandise." So was it, he says, in Greece and Rome, and so is it, he fears, in Germany. In the very prevalence of speculation he perceives a reason for distrust. Theory does not precede but follow action. When nations have mainly done their work, they begin to take account of it before passing away. The age of thinkers is later than that of doers, of philosophers than that of heroes, of critics than that of artists. Now,

all these views, were there time to examine them, might be shown to contain error, more or less, along with truth; but Lasaulx, from want of analytic power, fails to detect any of their erroneous elements. He seldom, indeed, distinguishes what is only generally from what is entirely true. Had he lived, however, through 1866 and 1871, he would probably at least have ceased to fear that philosophy and criticism had rendered Germany unfit for war.

His remarks on the geographical and historical relationships of Africa, Asia, and Europe to one another, on the descent and characteristics of their inhabitants, and on the significance and development of languages, need not detain us. He describes the movement of men, animals, plants, and pestilences from east to west as an objective law of life, the movement of the earth and planets on their own axes from west to east causing, he thinks, the stream of life and atmospheric influence to flow in the opposite direction. It does not seem to have occurred to him that an enormous number of facts appear at least to prove that animals and plants have radiated from many specific centres, or that a good enough reason may be given for plagues ordinarily spreading into Europe from the east or south-east without there being any necessity for having recourse to the supposition of a special law. If the localities in which the conditions and causes which generate plagues like the black death and cholera coexist and concur are to the east of Europe, it seems superfluous to call in a special law to account for these diseases coming from that quarter instead of from the west, particularly as in the latter case they would require to cross the Atlantic even if generated in America, and if in Asia a continent and two oceans. War is another thing which our author strenuously affirms to be a divine and universal law. He fully accepts the saying of Democritus, Πόλεμος πατὴρ πάντων. All the great revolutions in history, all important advances in culture, appear to him to have been introduced by wars between the eastern and western, southern and northern nations. In discussing the speculations of Cousin, I have already had occasion to separate the error from the truth in this opinion. War between man and man is no mere continuation, no necessary

consequence, of the elemental strife of nature or of the struggle of all organised beings for existence. A war like that recently witnessed between France and Germany, instead of being a result either of the *rerum concordia discors* sung by ancient poets, or of the struggle for existence dwelt on by modern naturalists, is an example of a kind of discord which certainly cannot be shown to be an essential condition of harmony and which involves a reckless waste of the means of existence.

I must not do more than simply state the formulæ in which Lasaulx would include the various phases of human development. That of religion is, he maintains, progress from the pantheistic systems of the east, and the polytheistic systems of the west, to the monotheistic system of the Jews and Arabs, and from abstract monotheism to the Trinitarian doctrine of Christianity, which is not a national but a universal religion. He does not prove—what, however, clearly needs proof—that these forms of religion really represent stages of history,—that Greek polytheism, for example, preceded Jewish monotheism. As to general political progress, he adopts the formula of Hegel, that in the east only one is free, while in the Greco-Roman world some, and in the Germanic world all, are free; and as to the succession of governments or political constitutions, a formula based on Aristotle's distribution of them into three proper and three perverted forms, according to which the order of their appearance is monarchy, despotism, aristocracy, oligarchy, democracy, ochlocracy, the last of which ends in complete anarchy. He has not shown that the facts warrant either of these formulæ; and I quite disbelieve that he could have done so. The arts have arisen, he thinks, in the following order: Architecture, sculpture, and painting (the arts of form), music, poetry, and prose (the arts of expression). He left the proof to a special treatise on the philosophy of art which he contemplated, but did not execute. Philosophy he describes as issuing from religion, and passing through doubt either into subjective despair or objective reconciliation with religion; obviously a most inadequate account of its course, even if correct so far as it goes, which is probably not the case.

The section of his treatise which he devotes to the heroes of

humanity cannot be said to be a careful and philosophical discussion of their significance in history; but it is a very beautiful glorification of their services, and, in the main, most true.

He treats somewhat fully of the decline and fall of nations. He admits that a people may have its life crushed out at any stage of its career by the violence of a stronger people, and he indicates that many peoples never outlive infancy, owing to external conditions being unfavourable; but the thought on which he chiefly dwells is, that nations, no less than individuals, must in the course of nature die of age; that to each nation there has been allotted a certain amount of vitality which must gradually develop and manifest itself in the formation of speech, the growth of religious convictions, the building up of a constitution and policy, in military achievement, in morality, artistic production, and metaphysical speculation; but which is thereby, of necessity, gradually exhausted, so that the nation has no sooner reached maturity, than its powers begin to fail, and a process of decay sets in which inevitably ends in dissolution. For this favourite thought of his I can find no adequate evidence. The nations which can even seem to have died of age are but few. I doubt, indeed, if any nation can be shown to have died merely of age—merely of internal decay. It is certain that if Greece had been sound within she would have made a better resistance to the Romans; and that if the vital powers of Rome had not been sapped, she would have driven back the Goths; but it is not certain—it is not the fact—that Greece and Rome died merely because they had reached the end of their lives. No satisfactory proof that they could never by any possibility, or in any circumstances, have recovered themselves, had they been left to themselves, has ever been presented, and is not likely ever to be presented. Then, where is the warrant for supposing that a nation has a certain definite vitality in it like an individual? There is none. It is a mere figure of speech to talk of the birth of a nation, or of what a nation brings with it into the world at birth. A nation is to some extent born every day. It is continually being renewed. Every new man brings with it some addition, every new generation a vast addition, to the store of a nation's potential

vitality; and the sources of intellectual and moral improvement remain open from age to age. It is a fallacy to attribute to a collective existence, whose parts are continually changed by substitution, what belongs to a single being in virtue of its parts being continuously developed by growth. And of all improbable causes of the decay of nations, the least probable, perhaps, is the alleged exhaustion by heroic, and wise, and pious men, of the life originally inherent in them. Great and good men bring life to nations, and deprive them of none. Nations die, in fact, not through the operation of any fatalistic law, but because they reject life. In their lowest state the appeal may be made to them, Why will ye die?

Lasaulx seeks to determine—and with this attempt he concludes his treatise—at what stage of life the most highly cultivated nations of Europe, and in particular Germany, are now standing; but he comes to no definite conclusion. He sees in regard to speech, religion, social morality, and political life, manifold signs of increasing exhaustion and corruption, and yet indications that modern European humanity is substantially sound at the core, while Christianity suggests and sustains the highest hopes. There is nothing specially characteristic in this part of his teaching.

CHAPTER XIII.

LAZARUS, LOTZE, AND HERMANN.

In France, at least for the last hundred years, political interests have exerted a stronger influence on the intellectual life of the nation than philosophical interests; while in Germany, during the same period, the opposite has been the case. Hence a fact which must have obtruded itself on the mind of every reader of this work—the significant and characteristic fact—that while in France historical theory has been almost always the offshoot of political theory, in Germany it has almost always grown out of philosophical theory. In tracing the development of historical speculation in France, we find ourselves naturally led—we may almost say compelled—to associate nearly every historical system which comes before us with some one or other of the political parties which have in that country struggled for civil and social supremacy; in tracing the development of historical speculation in Germany, we are as naturally constrained, on the other hand, to refer the succession of systems which present themselves for consideration to the succession of philosophical schools which have there claimed intellectual supremacy.

I shall not at present inquire into the cause of the remarkable circumstance just mentioned, nor shall I even indicate how it explains, as it undoubtedly does explain, many of the distinctive differences between French and German historical philosophy; I shall do both when I come to take a general survey of the course of historical speculation in its whole length and breadth. At present I desire it merely to be observed, that while almost every historical theory which has appeared in Germany has had its root in a philosophical system, all the philosophical systems

of Germany have not borne historical theories. With those which have not done so, I have, of course, no concern. It is only in so far as a general philosophy has included philosophy of history that I can treat of it in this work; and only if it has included a general philosophy of history—an essentially developed and complete historical system—that I can treat of it in this volume. I must therefore pass over *sub silentio* not only a vast number of most eminent philosophical thinkers, but entire philosophical schools.

Thus I can here take no account of Baader and his followers. I cordially recognise the great ability and significance of Baader as a metaphysician, a moralist, and, above all, as a speculative theologian. I know nothing which would be so likely to quicken and invigorate our theology—which is in a dismally feeble and torpid state at present—as an earnest study of the Christian mystics, and particularly of Baader, the last great philosophical theosophist, and perhaps the greatest of all. If his professed followers be few, those whom he has influenced, from Schelling downwards, are many, and indeed comprehend nearly all the profounder theological thinkers of Germany during the last thirty years. We miss, however, in Baader's writings even an outline of what can with any propriety be called a philosophy or science of history. We find merely a number of affirmations and hints which might be utilised by a philosophy of history, or which might even possibly be so combined, developed, and applied as to contribute in a considerable degree towards the formation of a philosophy of history of a similar character to that which we owe to Krause; but to do this would require great skill, and has not yet been attempted. When we come to discuss how historical science is related to theology, it will be necessary to examine some of the positions taken up by Baader; but at present—when dealing only with general systems—we pass him by.

It is not otherwise as regards Schopenhauer and his followers. There is no more significant phenomenon in the history of recent German philosophy than the rapid spread of this school during the last few years, and the popularity of the writings which have issued from it; but a philosophy of history it has not yet pro-

duced, and is not likely, perhaps, to produce. In two respects only has Schopenhauer claims to a place in the present work. He has argued that there can be no such thing as a science of history, because the phenomena of history can only be co-ordinated, not subordinated—are so essentially individual that they cannot be generalised and classified—and are so variable and yet monotonous that there is no permanent truth or real instruction in them.[1] These bold negations require, of course, to be refuted. As Schopenhauer, however, is by no means the only person who has denied the possibility of a science of history —as his reasoning is even by no means the most plausible which has been employed to prove that there can be none—I must discuss the general problem itself, and state and examine his arguments along with those of others. He interests us much more by his general view of the character of human life and history—by his gloomy and cynical pessimism. Pessimism is no new thought, but one almost as old as reflection, and which has in no age failed to find some measure and form of expression; but Schopenhauer was the first speculative thinker, at least in Europe, to develop it into a distinctly philosophic shape, and to maintain, with the clearest consciousness of what he was doing and the most thorough conviction, that it was the true and adequate theory of man's course and destiny. His absolute pessimism, which daringly pronounced the world the worst possible, has been toned down by Von Hartmann to what may, for distinction's sake, be called a relative pessimism, which does not refuse to admit that the world is the best possible, while still holding that it is worse than would have been none at all, —which recognises progress and improvement in history, yet regards it as on the whole an essentially irrational process, the successive epochs of which are so many stadia of illusion,—which rejects the doctrine that pleasure is a merely negative state, and that pain alone is positive, being the necessary ground and characteristic of life, yet fully endorses the words of Sophocles,—

"Μὴ φῦναι τὸν ἅπαντα νικᾷ λόγον· το δ', επεὶ φανῇ,
Βῆναι κεῖθεν ὅθεν περ ἥκει
Πολὺ δεύτερον ὡς τάχιστα"—

[1] Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, Bd. ii., K. 38.

and of Byron,—

> "Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
> Count o'er thy days from anguish free;
> And know, whatever thou hast been,
> 'Tis something better—not to be."

Looking merely to philosophical interests, I cannot regret the rise and prevalence of pessimism, which is at least as true as ordinary optimism, which has been the root whence all the religions and philosophies of India have grown, which is the substance of Buddhism, which is merely the exaggeration of a most important element in Christianity that is exceedingly apt to be ignored, and which has been a presence and a power in much of the highest thought and finest feeling of all ages. Its natural tendency is—its providential mission must be—to cause men to look clearly and fully at the serious and tragical side of existence,—that from which they are most apt to turn away in order to take refuge in pious commonplaces about the divine goodness and everything being for the best,—and to show the shallowness of all theories and opinions which overlook how awful the disorder of the world is, how deeply rooted will and desire are in want, how closely dissatisfaction clings to all mortal being, how transitory and imperfect is all earthly enjoyment, how engrained evil is in human nature, and how little the labours of countless generations and the boasted achievements of science have done to free us from the slavery of sin. It must certainly be taken into account when we raise and examine the question on which both optimism and pessimism turn, What is the worth of human life? What is the aim and significance of history? That question I intend to discuss before the close of this work; but until its discussion is taken up, I must leave out of consideration Schopenhauer, Frauenstädt, Bahnsen, Dühring, Hartmann, Taubert, &c.

Beneke and his followers have, so far as I am aware, done nothing directly for the philosophy of history. And even Herbart, a singularly acute and independent thinker, and the founder of a school of philosophy almost as numerous and distinguished as that of Hegel, did but little. Yet he doubtless gave a considerable impulse to historical speculation, as to other

kinds of speculation, by his vigorous and decided opposition to the idealistic and pantheistic modes of theorising adopted by Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. He was especially the needed counterpart and counterpoise of Hegel, in whom the idealistic movement culminated. To an extravagant monism he opposed an atomistic individualism equally extravagant, but useful, because the contrary extreme. What Hegel exaggerated he ignored, and what Hegel ignored he exaggerated. Whereas Hegel resolved all the variety of physical forms and powers into the phases of a dialectic process, Herbart resolved them into a multitude of absolutely simple, eternal, unextended, independent beings. And in like manner, while Hegel regarded history as the development of an impersonal idea which at every moment of its logically necessitated course casts aside and sacrifices masses of individuals, Herbart regarded it as an aggregate of individuals accidentally rather than organically connected.

He had also the merit of seeing that the connection between history and psychology is of the most intimate and comprehensive character. There can be no reasonable doubt that the science of history must be essentially a psychological science; that the true centre where all the manifold elements of an adequate theory of human development must meet is the mind of man. Some have sought for it in external and physical influences, others in social institutions, others in abstract ideas of the speculative reason, and others in theological doctrines; but they have necessarily sought in vain, as the true unity can only be found in the principle and laws of mental activity itself. Herbart had a clear perception of this truth. He has represented the laws which regulate the development of society as simply applications of the laws which regulate the development of the individual. In his view the fundamental ethical ideas which rule the actions of each separate person are also organising powers in each nation's life. He thus looked on the analysis of the individual mind as the groundwork of historical science. At the same time, he recognised that psychology required to be corrected and completed through history itself. He felt that it must be thereby widened, so as to include a theory of human character as manifested in the diverse tribes and nations of men,

before the science of history could have a sure basis. He realised, that is to say, the importance and significance as regards historical science of what Mr J. S. Mill has called ethology, and his own followers *Völkerpsychologie.*

It was a legitimate consequence of his manner of viewing history that he should have decidedly refused to regard its course as a natural necessary growth, and should have insisted on a recognition of the rights of what may be called accidents. It was another consequence no less legitimate, that he should have denied that there was evidence of its course being virtually completed, and should have maintained that there was room for indefinite progress in the future. The organisation of humanity seemed to him to have been hitherto little more than a thing in preparation. It was constantly becoming, however, he thought, more and more of a fact, more and more complex and comprehensive, and he anticipated a day when the whole earth would be covered with a confederation of peaceful and well-regulated States.[1]

Among the followers of Herbart probably no one has distinguished himself so much by his efforts to introduce a scientific spirit and method into the study of history as Prof. M. Lazarus. He has written various essays with this view in the 'Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft,' edited by himself and by Prof. Steinthal, another eminent disciple of Herbart. A number of his contributions to the above-named periodical refer only indirectly to historical science,—as, *e.g.*, "Introductory Thoughts on the Psychology of Peoples and the Science of Language," "Geography and Psychology," "On the Origin of Manners," and "On the History of the Natural Sciences." They do refer to it, however, much more than their titles lead us to anticipate; for in these essays Dr Lazarus endeavours to prove that the natural sciences have grown out of natural histories, and become what they are by a process equally applicable to human history, and equally capable of raising it to the rank of a science. In the fact that natural histories have become natural sciences, he sees a proof that human history will become a science, and

[1] For Herbart's views on history see his Werke, v. 160-174; viii. 101-106, 157-171.

in the way in which they have become sciences an indication of how it must become a science. He endeavours, above all, to show that psychology is to history what physiology (using the word as equivalent to biology) is to botany and zoology. It is the science of mental life and development, whether individual or general, whether biographical or historical, just as physiology is the science of organic life and development, whether vegetable or animal. The laws of biography—the laws of the growth of individual minds—must, he holds, be resolvable into the psychology of the individual mind; and in like manner the laws of history, which may be called the biography of nations or of humanity, into comparative psychology. This comparative psychology may thus almost be said to be the true science of history. Its conclusions are the ultimate and universal principles of historical explanation. The theory of social evolution is but a special application of the theory of the formation and operation of national characteristics, which can only be reached by psychological analysis and generalisation. In working at "Völkerpsychologie," therefore, Dr Lazarus conceives himself engaged in laying the very foundation of historical science. Now, what is the real relation of psychology to the science of history is a question which I reserve for future discussion, and so merely say here, that although I do not believe that the latter science can be wholly resolved into the former, and shown to have no proper standing of its own, yet it is essentially *a psychological science,* and cannot be solidly founded without the help of a psychology which has been widened and developed in the ways indicated by Dr Lazarus. That Dr Lazarus has rendered valuable services to such a psychology we may also admit, although we may wish at the same time that he had proceeded on other views as to the causation and connection of mental phenomena than those of Herbart.

His essays on "Condensation of Thought in History" (vol. ii.) and on "Ideas in History" (vol. iii.) expressly demand the attention of historical philosophers; they are directly addressed to them. Both bear clear traces of the influence of Herbart, but not less of that of W. von Humboldt. This illustrious man, in his essay "On the Task of the Historian" (1820), and in that

"On the Diversity of the Formation of Human Language, and its Influence on the Intellectual Development of Mankind," an introduction to his work on the Kawi language (1836), propounded some valuable and suggestive views regarding historical philosophy. In the latter he insisted that history, instead of being a process of continuous and necessary evolution, is a free and multiple movement, in which each individual, generation, and nation, has a distinctive life and worth of its own. He there set forth in a clear and effective manner a conception of history which fully recognised what is ideal and general in human development, while it directly opposed all those one-sided and fatalistic apprehensions according to which the universal is alone real and essential, and individuals are only evanescent and illusory accidents, mere means and instruments for the self-manifestation of an impersonal idea. In the earlier writing he showed, much better than any one had done before, that the historian, in order faithfully to recall and represent what had really been in the past, must not only ascertain by an impartial and searching criticism precisely what the outward facts were, and how they were connected, but must penetrate to the invisible forces or ideas in which they originated, and must even reach down and stretch back to those ideas which have pervaded and shaped the general course of history, and must, above all, grasp firmly and comprehensively that idea of humanity itself, the realisation of which in all aspects and under all forms is the end of universal history. While philosophy seeks to reach the ultimate ground of existence, and art to realise the ideal of beauty, history aims to produce a perfectly clear and truthful, a complete and lifelike, picture of the past or of some portion of it; and in order to do that, Humboldt argued, it could not rest in such mere fragments of fact as were apparent and external, but must discover as far as possible the correlative invisible facts which had conditioned and caused them, and with which they must again be mentally united before they can be understood or even faithfully described. This ideal part needs not and ought not to be introduced into history, for it is already there, but it must be sought for. In a word, Humboldt showed, as well perhaps as could be done in a merely general way, that

ideas, ideal elements, ideal forces, must be largely recognised by every historian who has any true conception of his duty.

Lazarus adopts this general thought of Humboldt, but sees (what is indeed obvious) that it ought not to remain a mere generality. And accordingly, in the essay on "Ideas in History," he endeavours to make it comparatively precise and definite. He distributes ideas into two great classes, *Ideen der Auffassung* and *Ideen der Gestaltung;* the former being those which merely reflect and represent reality — and the latter, whether ethical or æsthetical, those which anticipate, prefigure, and fashion it. It is in formative ideas—those which are not mere images or transcripts, but types or ideals—that we must look for the chief impelling powers of history. Until they come into operation—or, in other words, so long as men are moved merely by their natural wants and desires—there is no history properly so called, so that history originates with and in them, and it is throughout moulded and directed by them. They are no transcendental causes or external forces which merely act on humanity, but internal and indwelling capacities which have grown up through the action of psychical processes —"the products," as Lazarus says, "of fantasy directed towards perfection;" or, as Shakespeare says, of that

> "Shaping fantasy, that apprehends
> More than the cool reason ever comprehends."

To show clearly and in detail how and why the ideals of goodness, religion, and beauty vary in each age, both in themselves and in the measure and manner of their influence, is the task of historical psychology. Dr Lazarus within the limits of his essay can only indicate that they act in a threefold way. They, in the first place, help to perfect the personality; they raise the individuals most capable of being raised above mere natural wants and appetencies, above the ordinary level of human life, and make them the guides of their own age and prophets of better ages to come. They next manifest their power in the ideal works and original inventions of these individuals. And finally, they attain their fullest realisation in social, legal, political, and religious arrangements and institutions,—products of the spirit which not merely endure, passive

and unchanging, like works of art and science, but through which reason actively perpetuates and propagates itself. It is only in virtue of their connection with institutions that the great majority of men live in any measure in ideas, or, in other words, with the true life. Hence the importance of institutions and the interest men take in them. Hence a key to the explanation of the part which they have filled in history.

Such is the path which W. von Humboldt opened and which Lazarus has so far followed out. There can be no doubt, it appears to me, that it is a path which is safe and good. Humboldt and Lazarus have not, like many others, struck into a way leading "painfully nowhither" or to positive falsehood, but into one which leads to real and relevant truth in abundance. The pyschology of Lazarus is, indeed, unless I am greatly mistaken, an inadequate one in several respects, and especially as regards its mode of explaining the origin of the ideas; but it would be altogether unjust to confound it with the sort of psychology against the union of which with history Hegel so scornfully protested. It has nothing in common with "that petty knowledge of men which, instead of considering what is universal and essential in human nature, looks only to what is particular and capricious in isolated instincts and passions." The psychological activities which are called ideas by Humboldt and Lazarus are truly the very tissues of social organisation and historical development. A thorough investigation of them would lead, not indeed to a complete theory of history, but to a most essential part of that theory, one bearing much the same relation to the science of history as histology—the theory of the structure, chemical composition, and vital properties of the animal tissues—bears to physiology. It is obtrusively manifest, however, that even from Lazarus we have nothing at all approximating to such an analysis of the ideas in question as is required. Humboldt did no more than indicate that an analysis was necessary, and Lazarus has done only a very little more. Historical histology still awaits its Schleiden and its Schwann.

The essay on the "Condensation (*Concretion, Verdichtung*) of Thought" does not call for criticism. All its leading con-

ceptions are indicated in the following summary. Dr Lazarus first directs attention to such facts as that mathematical theorems, which those who have not received and profited by a mathematical training are utterly unable to demonstrate, often appear to those who have, to be as simple and obvious as the axioms do to other men; and that a schoolboy of the present day, in easily parsing an ordinary sentence, displays a kind and amount of knowledge which would have caused him to be regarded as a second Prometheus by Plato, who knew only of two categories of words, the ὄνομα and ῥῆμα. He shows how these facts imply that the results of the intellectual toils of one age are psychologically so transformed as to become elementary notions or at least obvious truths to a succeeding age; that a long series of scientific discoveries, by which the mind has risen slowly and with difficulty, step by step, generation after generation, to the recognition of some great general principle, may be all compressed into that principle, while it itself comes to seem almost a commonplace. He argues that even errors are very far from useless links in the succession of acts by which the knowledge of truth is thus gained. And then he points out that the condensation of ideas is not merely a personal or subjective process, such as is involved in mathematical and philological training, but also a general process which realises itself in objective means and agencies. Language, for instance, is constantly accumulating and condensing masses of thought for the use of countless different individuals. So are manners, institutions, and inventions. Thus, in a watch, for example, there is stored up a wealth of scientific knowledge in virtue of which it enables its possessor to determine without effort, without telescopical observations, without mathematical calculations, and with a precision beyond the reach of Hipparchus, Ptolemy, and Copernicus, at what point of its apparent course the sun is, and at what point of its rotation the earth is. The nature of the condensation of thought affords a ground of confidence that, however knowledge may accumulate, the individual man will not necessarily be crushed by it; its growth involves a law which, if taken proper advantage of, will always enable men to cope with it, and to raise themselves to the level

of the science and culture of their age. At the same time, it is only through the labour of personal appropriation that the products of the condensation wrought by the collective reason can ever be made personal possessions.

II.

It is only from superficial and insufficient reasons that Hermann Lotze, Professor at Göttingen, one of the most distinguished of living German philosophers, has been often described as a disciple of Herbart. He has himself in his 'Streitschriften' (1857) exposed the injustice. The chief of such reasons as there are is that he resolves the universe into a multiplicity of simple and immaterial beings. This has seemed to many enough to warrant the designation "Herbartist;" but they have overlooked these two facts,—first, that he was led to this view, not through the influence of Herbart, but partly, perhaps, through that of Leibnitz, and mainly through his own studies in physical science; and secondly, that, unlike Herbart, he represents the monads as manifestations of the absolute, and refers all their combinations and co-operations to its activity. As all appearances, he teaches, are only manifestations of immaterial or ideal substances, so are these themselves only manifestations of God; their reality consists not in existing in themselves, but for themselves—not out of or apart from God, but with more or less of consciousness. There is real existence only in so far as there is that realisation of the good which implies spiritual existence. The world of space and matter—the world of appearance—has no true existence—no existence for itself, but only for God and the souls dependent on Him. The modern philosophers to whom Lotze owes most would appear to be Leibnitz and Herder, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Weisse, although traces of Herbart's influence, particularly as regards psychology, are, I think, not wanting. He obviously owes much more, however, to the free gifts of nature than to any other source. Among these gifts must be reckoned an intellect singularly active and acute, and equally capable of abstraction and analysis, a fertile conceptive faculty, a susceptible imagination, a delicate sense of

beauty, and enthusiasm for moral excellence. It was his interest in art and poetry which first moved him to study philosophy; and, alike in design and elaboration, his philosophy is characterised by the presence of an æsthetic element and colouring. Only less than what he owes to nature is what he owes to the thorough discipline in physical, and especially in physiological science, acquired in passing through the curriculum of studies required for medical graduation. His eminence as a physiologist and pathologist is unquestioned. In this respect he has an enormous advantage over almost all his philosophical compeers, and he has fully proved that he knows how to profit by it.

The range of Professor Lotze's literary activity has been a remarkably wide one. He is the author of a 'General Pathology and Therapeutics,' a 'General Physiology of the Bodily Life,' a 'Medical Psychology,' a 'Metaphysics,' a 'Logic,' several essays on æsthetic subjects, and a 'History of Æsthetics;' and every one of these works has justly attracted attention by the mastery of relevant facts, the independence of judgment, the ingenuity of suggestion, the skill in arrangement, and the graces of style displayed. He, if any one, might venture without presumption to attempt a general description of man in all his aspects and relations, metaphysical, physical, and spiritual—individual, social, and historical. Alexander von Humboldt was scarcely more specially qualified by natural genius and varied preparation to write a Cosmos than Hermann Lotze to write a Microcosmos,—the much more difficult task, it seems to me, of the two, and one which has been executed with a talent little, if at all, inferior—certainly with a very rare talent. Both works are alike the results of an unusual knowledge of all the relevant materials, of a high philosophical power which broods over and operates upon them until order and light and unity are evolved, and of a poetical sense and artistic skill which invest each part with grace, and shape the whole into "a thing of beauty."

The mere title of Lotze's work is enough to show that it is both a great deal more and somewhat less than a philosophy of history: 'Mikrokosmus, Ideen zur Naturgeschichte und Geschichte der Menscheit. Versuch einer Anthropologie.' (3 Bde. 1 Aufl. 1856-64, 2 Aufl. 1869-72.) It is a great deal more. Its

subject is man, not merely in his historical development, but in all his relationships. It lays under contribution not history only, but the whole circle of the sciences, so far as they seem able to throw any considerable light on the great and complex problem of human existence. At least a half of the work has no direct connection with historical investigation or historical speculation. Even the intimate union of that part, however, with the rest of the work—the chapters which treat of history—is markedly characteristic. No one could realise more thoroughly than Lotze does that the interdependence of the sciences and the interconnection of the various orders of facts in the universe are close everywhere, but especially close within the microcosm; that man cannot be understood unless studied in a comprehensive manner and catholic spirit; that no single aspect of human life is intelligible by itself, but only through its connection with all its other aspects, and even with the general system of nature and the character of the First Cause. In a word, he conceives of history in the same grand, many-sided, and impartial manner which I have already dwelt on in connection with Herder. It is in the spirit and after the example not of Herbart but of Herder that Lotze has laboured. His 'Mikrokosmus' is in the main, as he himself says, another attempt to accomplish, although, of course, with the clearer views which had arisen in the intervening time, what Herder had undertaken in his 'Ideen zur Geschichte der Menscheit.' It is precisely such an attempt as would have rejoiced the heart of Herder, who deeply felt that in many respects his own work was premature, who in no mock humility called it "the most imperfect work that mortal ever wrote," and who would have found in Lotze's almost all, whether as regards method, character, or aim, that he had deemed really durable in his own.

I fully recognise, then, that those books and chapters of the 'Mikrokosmus' which do not directly bear on the comprehension of history bear on it indirectly. They are all occupied with the elucidation of what is essential to the understanding of history; with some aspect of that one subject which is common to the science of history and to every other science which belongs to the same order, the psychological order, of the sciences.

They all treat of man, and history is just the record of the collective acts and experiences of men when grouped together into societies. Thus the general subject of the first book is "the body;" of the second book, "the soul;" of the third book, "life;" of the fourth book, "man;" and of the fifth book, "the mind." The first discusses the conflict of views regarding nature —mechanism in the physical world and in life—the foundation of life—the structure of the animal body—and the conservation of the animal existence; the second, the evidence for the soul's existence—its nature and properties—the succession of ideas—the forms of relative knowing—and what are feeling, self-consciousness, and will; the third, the connection between body and soul—the seat of the soul—the action of the body on the soul and of the soul on the body—the life of matter, &c.; the fourth, nature and ideas—development out of chaos—the unity of nature—man and beasts—and the varieties of the human species; and the fifth, the relation of mind and soul—the sensitive principles in man—speech and thought—cognition and truth,—conscience and morality. These are the books which are least directly connected with historical philosophy, and yet few of the discussions in any of them are not connected with it, and that not very indirectly. This I cannot spend time in proving; but I must remark that there is one thought which pervades all these books, and which Professor Lotze carries with him into his consideration of history—viz., that there is no incompatibility between the mechanical and the teleological view of nature,—that, on the contrary, it is only narrowness and one-sidedness of mind which has ever led to their being separated and opposed. He finds mechanical action and law everywhere present in the structure and operations of the universe, yet everywhere evincing that they are subordinate to ideas and ends.

With the sixth book—"the course of the world"—we are brought into immediate contact with history; the seventh book is expressly on "history;" and the eighth book is on "progress." It is from the perusal of these books that we learn that the 'Mikrokosmus,' if much more than a philosophy of history, is also considerably less. It deals with a large number of the questions with which such a philosophy should deal. It utilises,

with undeniable skill, most of the materials on which such a philosophy should operate. Far from professing, however, to be a philosophy of history, it expressly disclaims the ambitious wish to be so regarded; and the disclaimer must be admitted to be necessary and well founded were it only because of the entire omission of all investigations concerning the object, limits, relationship to other kinds of knowledge, method, divisions, and general organisation of the said philosophy. It appropriates and uses the subject-matter of historical philosophy, but in order to supply what would otherwise be wanting in an anthropology, in order to complete a general theory of human existence, and not in order to advance historical philosophy itself. If its treatment of history should also contribute to the improvement of the science of history, that is a secondary consideration, and not what is directly aimed at.

The sixth book, I have said, brings us into immediate contact with history. It cannot be said to do more, and, in fact, does that only in part. It treats first of the influences of external nature on human development; and the chapter devoted to this subject exemplifies admirably a marked characteristic of its author's mind—a wise scepticism, a distrust of easily formed generalisations. It is rare to find an intellect so inventive and suggestive, and at the same time so habitually alive to the danger of belief exceeding proof; so carefully on its guard both against the merely plausible conjectures which often pass even in the scientific world as certainties, and against the self-illusions of its own fancy. This characteristic has led to his being sometimes described as over-sceptical and undecided; but it is assuredly in all departments of science a valuable habit of mind, and in the region of historical speculation one absolutely invaluable. I have nowhere met with so clear and truthful an exposition of what is rational, and exposure of what is deceptive, in those vague and grandiose views regarding the relation of nature to man which Schelling, Steffens, Hegel, Lasaulx, and so many others, have oracularly promulgated, as in this chapter. Admitting, as every one must, that nature acts on man not only in a practical and utilitarian way, but also as an object of contemplation and æsthetic enjoyment, he conclusively shows how

very little rational warrant there is for such assertions as that the characters of individuals and nations are simply or mainly reflections of the characters of the countries which they inhabit—that there is a special and scientifically inexplicable harmony between lands and their peoples—that men in the early ages of the world lived in a more intimate sympathy of mind and heart with nature than in these latter days—that the sympathy between man and the world, however, has always been such that revolutions in his history have invariably been attended by extraordinary appearances or operations among its phenomena, &c.

The second chapter describes the temperaments and delineates the distinctive characteristics of men and women. The third chapter illustrates by numerous instances how and why moral practices and habits vary according to times and circumstances. The fourth chapter portrays, so far at least as general features are concerned, the hunter, shepherd, and agricultural forms of society, and indicates the ways in which the succession of these phases of historical progress is related to the development of the family, the division of labour, and the advance of general culture. The last chapter treats of "the inner life."

We pass to the seventh book—the first of the third volume. It is full of excellent thoughts—so full, indeed, that I must not attempt to enumerate them even in the briefest form of statement which would be intelligible, but must do little more than indicate the order in which the various subjects discussed are brought before us. It begins with a chapter on the creation of man. We are reminded that we know almost nothing either about the commencement of the world or about its close—that we know only a small portion of what lies between them—yet that among all but the very lowest tribes of men there are theories and traditions regarding both, perhaps just because there is so little warrant for them, and so little likelihood of their being dispelled by any knowledge of the reality. In Christianity the beginning of things is represented as the creation, and the end as the final judgment. The idea of creation has not been disproved or expelled by the progress of science. The laws of nature do not exclude the creative or even the continuous action of God. The belief in special instances of divine interven-

tion—as, for example, in the creation of man—may or may not be well founded; but it is the expression of a feeling that unless God be free man cannot be free, and of the want which men experience of feeling themselves free. This want must be satisfied, and a place must be found for freedom. We cannot draw, however, a straight and rigid line between nature and history, merely by representing the former as the realm of necessity and the latter as the realm of freedom. Spirit rises out of nature as well as rises above it, and instead of excluding includes it; and nature may involve elements of freedom which only require particular combinations of circumstances in order to disengage and manifest themselves. No view as to the origin of organised beings does much to help us to conceive what took place. Science really casts little light on the subject.

Our author next dicusses the meaning or purpose of history. He shows that those who have described it as the education of humanity, or as the realisation of the idea of humanity, or as a divine poem, have slurred over grave difficulties, and that their conclusions are extremely one-sided, if not utterly erroneous. Is, then, the notion true that history has in itself no real meaning or worth?—that the whole good of humanity lies beyond time? There have always been many who thought so; and exaggerated or even dangerous as such a view is, it is not wholly false, and probably leads to the conception which is required to correct and supplement those which have been examined. The end of earthly history would appear not to be in itself, but in affording individuals a scene, opportunities, and motives for unselfish action, and a means of enjoying the happiness which flows from unselfish action. Yet this view also, although removing some difficulties, does not enable us, even when connected with all the empirical knowledge we can acquire, to trace the plan of history. If we knew vastly more of history than we are ever likely to do, we should still have little conception of what it meant in itself, and far less of what it meant in connection with the course of all things (ch. ii.) Under the heading of "the efficient forces in history" Herr Lotze treats of the origin of civilisation, the influence of great men, the nature of laws of social development, the compatibility of freedom with the regularities

of statistics and with predestination, the principles of permanence and innovation, the decay of nations, and the importance of tradition (ch. iii.) And under that of "the external conditions of historical development" he discusses the questions of the unity or plurality of human descent, the identity or diversity of natural dispositions, and the character and degree of influence exercised by geographical situation, climate, and physical forces generally, on the progress of civilisation (ch. iv.) There is so much which merits praise in these two chapters that it is difficult to single out what deserves special commendation; but perhaps the pages devoted to the consideration of statistical regularities and the problem of human unity, are among those most eminently worthy of an attentive study. They admirably exemplify, I think, the humility and caution in combination with courage and ingenuousness which characterise the true scientific spirit not less than do its intellectual peculiarities. The sincerity of a man's love of truth, and the degree to which he has cultivated it, can have no better criteria than the measure of his anxiety not to overestimate the amount or certainty of his knowledge, and of his readiness to confess its inadequacy and imperfections. There are no qualities more conspicuous than these in Lotze's treatment of such themes as those to which I have referred.

The fifth chapter delineates the general course of historical development. The East, Greece, Rome, Judaism, Christianity, and the Germanic world, are made to pass before us in a series of beautiful and truthful panoramic scenes. That Lotze displays great taste and skill in drawing such pictures there is no possibility of disputing; but there is, perhaps, some ground for thinking that he exercises his gifts a little too often, and that, admirable as his pictures are, they sometimes leave no room for what would have been even more valuable. This fifth chapter, however, crowded as it is with pictures, will not be said to verify the charge by any one who considers the relation in which it stands to the following book. It is the transition and introduction to that book, which is meant to show the course of historical progress in the several special developments of human life, and accordingly required to be preceded by a view of the course

of development as a whole. Such a view could obviously be no otherwise so effectively presented as in the pictorial manner which Lotze has actually adopted.

Each of the five chapters of the eighth book is a study of a particular phase of progress. Thus the first treats of truth and knowing; the second, of the enjoyment of life and labour; the third, of beauty and art; the fourth, of the religious life; and the fifth, of public life and society. The book, as a whole, therefore, obviously implies that there are five phases or forms of human development—viz., the intellectual, the industrial, the æsthetic, the religious, and the political; and we naturally anticipate that at its very outset an attempt will be made to prove that what the entire distribution of its contents assumes is sufficiently warranted. Not only, however, is this not the case, but our author nowhere tells us why he treats of progress under these headings and no others—nowhere endeavours to show that they correspond to its most comprehensive and distinct aspects, and that collectively they present all its aspects—nowhere refers each phase of progress to its psychological source. I cannot but agree with Professor Bona Meyer in regarding this as a serious defect. It is no answer, if it be meant as such, to say, as Professor Lotze does say, that the different phases of civilisation are in principle intimately united—that no one of them is ever wholly separated from all the rest—that in germ they are all ever present together, although one may be more prominent in one country or epoch and another elsewhere. That is perfectly true, and is very important truth; but it is certainly not truth which renders it unnecessary to analyse history into special developments with all the scientific thoroughness possible, or to show how these developments limit and influence one another, or to trace them to their foundations in human nature.

Lotze begins with the intellectual development, as being that on which the other developments are mainly dependent. He represents it as having three stages, of which the first is characterised by the prevalence of mythological fancy, the second by that of reflection on the nature of things, and the third by the application of the method of science. This is the only historical generalisation in the chapter, and it is based on exceedingly

little even of apparent evidence. It recalls Comte's law of the three states in all respects but the important one that there is no earnest attempt to prove or verify it. Mythology, it seems to me, ought not to be ranked as a stage of knowing at all; and the so-called second and third stages have never been found apart. The chief interest of the chapter probably lies in what does not here concern us—its attack on idealism.

In the next chapter our author traces the course which labour has followed from its earliest and rudest form, that of violent seizure or conquest which reaps where it has not sown, down to that which it now presents, when society is a vast and elaborate industrial organisation. At each step he points out both the gain and the loss, and certainly does not underestimate the latter. He next speaks of art in an admirable chapter, which is very inadequately summed up by saying that it represents the colossal as distinctive of Oriental, the sublime of Hebrew, the beautiful of Greek, the elegant and dignified of Roman, the expressive and imaginative of Medieval, and the ingenious and critical of Modern art. It is in reality a most attractive and faithful delineation of the general and distinctive features of art in all these stages.

The religious life is the subject of the fourth chapter. The fact that all religions of any great significance have originated in Asia leads our author to argue that the oriental is distinguished from the occidental mind in that the former regards the universe as a vast whole, where each part has its destined place, and exists only in and for the whole; while the latter regards it as a complex of general laws—a problem to solve and a theorem to apply. He traces the growth of religion in connection with that of society from fetichism onwards through the creeds of Egypt, India, Persia, and Greece. Greatly as these religions differ from one another, he finds that they are all characterised by the predominance of the cosmological element; while in Judaism and Christianity the moral element is supreme. Christianity looks less to works and more to dispositions, less to society and more to the individual, than Judaism. Its great moral principle is love; but as each of its commands is accompanied by a promise, it is a eudæmonistic system. Its essen-

tial kernel lies in its morality; and the opposition now so widely offered to it does not refer to that, but to certain historical positions respecting its origin to which the Church has committed it, to the authority claimed for the Bible, to dogmas which attempt to define what is indefinable, and to miracles. Professor Lotze would have the Church concede all that is demanded on these points; if she does not, he regards her as certain to perish. Here I venture to differ from him, and cannot but express my surprise that he should have pronounced so sweeping a judgment without any attempt to substantiate it.

The book concludes with a chapter on "public life and society." Here our author shows that although society may originate in the family, it is only in its rudest stages that it is the mere extension and continuation of the family; and then proceeds to describe the forms which it has assumed in the empires of the East, in Sparta, Athens, and Rome, and under the influence of Christianity. The chapter abounds in excellent historical observations, interwoven with judicious political reflections, which I must entirely pass over.

The ninth book—the last of the work—does not call for notice from us. It is partly metaphysical and partly theological, but not at all historical. In leaving the 'Mikrokosmus' I would again express my regret that I have been altogether unable in the space at my disposal to convey a notion of the vast number of suggestive and ingenious views on history which it contains. Many and admirable as they are, however, they do not constitute a system, and still less a science.

III.

I bring my account of the development of historical speculation in Germany to a close with the 'Philosophy of History' published in 1870 by Professor Conrad Hermann of Leipsic. This work is a very elaborate and systematic production, which has taken at least a quarter of a century to mature. As long ago as 1849 its author published a thoughtful tractate entitled 'Prolegomena to the Philosophy of History.' In 1850 he published 'Twelve Lectures on the Philosophy of History,' in which

he treated of the interest of the study of history—the relation of history to philosophy—the idea of history as at present apprehended—the way in which the science of history has grown up—the problem of the philosophy of history and the principles in which its solution must be sought—the extent to which history may be regarded as dynamical, as mechanical, as organic—and its threefold character as a succession of events, as a system inclusive of the coexistent and antagonistic groups of nations designated Asia and Europe, and as a completely articulated whole of peoples. The 'History of Philosophy' which he sent forth in 1867 was meant to prepare for his 'Philosophy of History,' and to illustrate the same principles within a more limited province. In the pages of the 'Philosophische Monatshefte' there have appeared among other essays from his pen the following: "The Philosophy of History as a Fundamental Philosophical Science in the Future;"[1] "The Character of History—a Philosophical Problem for the Present Time;"[2] and "Thoughts on the Philosophy of History."[3] Probably no other living German thinker has occupied himself so long and so earnestly with this department of inquiry; and probably, also, the reason thereof has been that no other has had so profound a sense of its importance. In his eyes the future of philosophy depends upon it as upon no other science; only by its help can there be henceforth any considerable advance in the general theory of the universe. One main result, he thinks, of the philosophical movement initiated by Kant, has been to make it manifest that the solution of the chief problems of existence must be sought for not in nature but in man. And what man is, he contends, must be found especially in history, which contains all that has ever been thought, felt, spoken, or done. To comprehend history must consequently be, so far as the interests of philosophy are concerned, far more important and necessary than to comprehend nature. There can be no higher or more general truth than that which is to be discovered in history; no firmer or broader basis on which to rear an adequate theory of human life, an ethics worthy of the name, than that which history is capable of supplying. It is this conviction which has caused Dr Hermann to apply himself

[1] Bd. ii. Hft. 3. [2] Bd. iv. Hft. 3. [3] Bd. vii. Hft. 2.

to the task of philosophically understanding history with such a manly tenacity. I cannot suppose that his labours will prove in vain, whatever may be the estimate which is ultimately put upon the results which he has reached. They must contribute in no inconsiderable measure to draw attention to a field of inquiry which will sooner or later yield rich harvests and an abundance of hid treasure. The twofold fact that all history has been for some time rapidly becoming scientific, and almost all science still more rapidly historical, is a "sign of the times" from which we can hardly be mistaken in inferring that the philosophy of history, little esteemed or cultivated as it may be at present, will at no very distant date occupy a place of honour. When that time has arrived, Dr Hermann's name can scarcely fail to be gratefully remembered for his leal-hearted devotion to a great scientific cause.

Hermann regards Hegel as his immediate, and, we may almost say, as his sole predecessor. He sets scarcely any value on what had been done in this sphere of thought before Hegel, or on what has been done since. He refers, indeed, to Herder's 'Ideas on the History of Mankind,' Schelling's 'Positive Philosophy,' and Bunsen's 'God in History;' but only to characterise the first as "devoid of scientific order and merely fragmentary," the second as "adventurous, mystical, and fantastical," and the third as "one-sidedly theological." He credits Hegel with being "the first systematic founder" of historical philosophy, and his theory with being the only one which needs to be taken into account. The aim which he proposes to himself is to find "the next higher truth" from which to contemplate the universe. I need scarcely say that this is a view from which I dissent *in toto*. There have been a good many important historical philosophers out of Germany, and there have been a good many in it besides Hegel and the three mentioned. But, apart from that consideration, in what sense, not equally applicable to the work of Hegel, is Herder's work "devoid of scientific order"? Hegel's general order is mainly a copy of that of Herder. If the connection of part with part in Hegel's work be somewhat closer than in Herder's, it does not logically follow that it is more scientific; and, as a matter of fact, it is utterly unscientific. The Hegelian

order can only be called "scientific" in some non-natural sense which Dr Hermann should have explained, or rather, the use of which he should have avoided. And in what sense is Herder's work "merely fragmentary," or even more fragmentary than Hegel's? Hegel expressly and deliberately excludes from consideration in his philosophy of history enormous masses of properly historical facts. His theory does not profess to apply to more than a fraction of the life of humanity in space and time. Herder at least tries to comprehend all the facts. He is decidedly more catholic in spirit than Hegel. Dr Hermann has given no satisfactory or even plausible reasons for describing Hegel as the first systematic founder of historical philosophy, and there are obviously none to give. It is not difficult to discover the source of our author's error; it is no other than the "line of buckets" theory—one of the shallowest and falsest theories afloat. "It is a peculiarity," he says, "which distinguishes philosophy from all other sciences, that it never makes any real advance or truly new discovery by small but only by great steps." This is the reason why he considers himself obliged to build on "the last great system." Now, even if there were such a distinction between philosophy and the sciences, it is not at all probable that there would be the same distinction between the philosophy of history and the sciences—that is, between one particular science and the others. There is no such distinction, however, between philosophy and the sciences. All honest work has its worth in philosophy as elsewhere. Of course, there, as elsewhere, the greatest men make the greatest steps; but that none but the greatest men make any step in advance at all, is a fancy entirely without warrant. Were there any truth in it, no ordinarily modest man would occupy himself with philosophy, but would abandon its pursuit to those who had the presumption to believe that they possessed genius of the highest order. Philosophy advances, not as Dr Hermann supposes, by a series only of great steps, by a succession only of great systems, but by every labour that extends the limits and increases the wealth of human thought; not by utilising merely the resources of its "last great system," but its whole past acquisitions, and probably still more the acquisitions of those subordinate sciences,

each of which, Dr Hermann himself admits, advances by countless small steps.

While Hermann estimates Hegel's historical philosophy so very highly, he shows himself perfectly aware of its faults; and his own work is, to a much greater extent, a criticism of that of Hegel than its continuation. He rejects, in fact, nearly everything which is distinctively Hegelian; and what he professes to have received from Hegel he might easily have got from many other authors. He brings against Hegel's treatment of history two charges as specially weighty. The first is, that Hegel has not endeavoured to solve, in his philosophy of history, the problem of the relation of necessary law to personal freedom, but has, implicitly or inferentially, sacrificed the latter to the former. This problem, according to Hermann, is central in historical science; and its solution must be sought, not by deduction from a definition, not outside of history, but in an unprejudiced and comprehensive study of human development as a whole. He finds no trace of such a study in Hegel. On the contrary, he finds that freedom is virtually eliminated by him from history, although it be precisely that which constitutes the specific differentia of human life. He devotes a considerable number of pages to show that necessity and freedom are both present in history—that the one does not exclude the other; but he has to confess that their coexistence is a riddle which he cannot solve. The philosophy of history, as he conceives of it, takes care to suppress neither, but fails fully to harmonise them. His second objection is more sweeping. It is, that Hegel's notion of history as a continuous process of dialectic evolution in a single straight line is neither rationally warranted nor consistent with the facts. It is, that the dialectic is arbitrary in itself, and inapplicable to history. No one could show better than Hermann has done the narrowness and capriciousness involved in Hegel's treatment of history as a process of length without breadth, as a necessary succession of stages in the realisation of a single substantial idea. He discards this error and all its consequences. He clears it and them away as completely as any man could either do or desire. It is only strange that having done so, he should still write as if Hegel

had founded the philosophy of history by a work unique in its kind and in its merits. What he has rejected in that work as worthless is virtually all that is Hegel's. It is vain to reply to this, that he still agrees with Hegel in regarding history as the process through which humanity gradually advances from bondage to rational freedom. Since if there be really, as Hermann holds, no place for true freedom in the Hegelian philosophy of history, if liberty be strangled in the folds of the dialectic, the agreement is merely verbal. And further, Hegel is no more entitled to be considered the originator of the view that history is a realisation of rational freedom, than he is entitled to be regarded as the inventor of the alphabet. Whatever there is of truth in that view—and it is undoubtedly in the main true—was very generally recognised long before Hegel was born.

What Hermann deems the most characteristic distinction between Hegel's philosophy of history and his own is, that in the former the course of humanity is conceived of as a dynamic process or organic growth, and in the latter as a work of art. He criticises and rejects the view that history is an organism, that its unity is that of a self-evolving, self-differentiating being or principle, and contends that it is more like a drama or painting, the unity of which is in its end. It does not, he thinks, start, like an organism, with unity, and develop therefrom into a multiplicity of parts; but, like a work of art, it begins with multiplicity, and ends by attaining unity. The point of view, therefore, which he adopts is the teleological. To him history appears as a system of means, divinely arranged, for the securing of spiritual ends—as the work not of a mere self-developing notion, but of a free and creative intelligence, who has so constituted it, by adjusting and disposing a multitude of agencies, that it prepares morally perfectible beings for another and higher life. Accordingly, he regards the task of its philosophy to be to show what adaptations of means to ends can be traced in it, how part is adjusted to part, and how all the parts are correlated into a system, and converge to a final cause. To accomplish this task it must direct its attention to the whole historical material as empirically presented to it, must study that material in all its aspects, and endeavour completely to

master it. The full comprehension of the facts ought to be its aim; and to reach that aim it should, instead of priding itself on immovably occupying some one particular point of view, or rigidly adhering to some one limited principle or process of method, be ready to examine the facts from any side and according to any method.

In these views, and in the considerations by which Dr Hermann defends and enforces them, there is doubtless much truth; but there is probably also some error. It is true, for example, that historical development differs in most important respects from organic growth; but it is surely going too far to represent it as more closely resembling the formation of a work of art. To most persons who have studied the subject it appears that Mr Herbert Spencer and others have very amply established that societies develop from unity, or at least from some comparatively homogeneous condition, to highly multiple and heterogeneous states by successive self-differentiations; and Dr Hermann should certainly not have rejected a generalisation which is so widely accepted as among the most remarkable in historical science without an attempt to disprove it. Then there is an ambiguity in speaking of the teleological point of view which Dr Hermann overlooks. To regard history teleologically, to study it as a system of means and ends, seems to him to be the same thing as to regard it as the work of God, and to study in it His purposes. That is altogether erroneous. An atheist may unreservedly adopt that point of view without being any the less an atheist. By final cause two distinct things are meant. It means what Aristotle meant by it, the intrinsic end of a thing, the realisation of its true nature; thus vision, for example, is the final cause of the eye. An inquiry into final causes in this sense is simply an inquiry into the natural tendencies of things as related to one another, and obviously such an inquiry, however far carried, will never in itself raise us to any thought or knowledge of God; it cannot take us beyond the objects examined. The mind may pass from the perception of adaptations to a belief in intentions, from observing relations of means to ends to inferring designs; but in doing so a distinct

process is involved, another kind of act—a process or act which transfers the intellect from the sphere of science into that of religion, so that through it we may attain a theology of history, but by no possibility a science of history. Dr Hermann reasons as if the teleological point of view were in itself a religious one, as if the principle of final causes had a single definite meaning, and it were in one and the same sense a religious and a scientific principle; whereas it is a religious principle in quite a different sense from that in which it is a scientific principle. The inquiry into the tendencies of historical agencies and events should be carefully distinguished from the inquiry into God's designs or purposes in their production or permission. Had Dr Hermann done so, he might, of course, have still insisted, and indeed not with less but with more effect, that the religious view of history is both a natural and legitimate one, and that we are perfectly warranted to pass from the proof of adaptations to the affirmation of intentions. He would thereby have prevented at the same time the possibility of the error which all experience shows is chiefly to be feared in this connection—viz., forgetting that the inquiry into tendencies or adaptations must precede that into intentions or designs, in consequence of which men look into history for the confirmation of their views of Providence, instead of forming their views of Providence from what they ascertain to be historically true. This is as much in opposition to the true interests of religion as of science. It perverts our science, and neither extends nor corrects our religion. If we go to history and search there for the verification of our views of Providence, we shall very probably find what we seek, however narrow may be our views; but we shall not thereby learn anything regarding Providence which we did not know before, nor unlearn any of our errors; whereas if we can, through honest study of history as it has really been, work our way even a little into an understanding of the great plan which has been slowly realised through millions of ignorant, selfish, perverse human wills in countless generations, we shall thereby obtain a veritable increase of our knowledge of God's character and ways, be led to feel in some feeble measure

how broad His thoughts are in comparison with ours, and have our own thoughts widened a little by communion with His. I must add that Dr Hermann seems to me to overestimate the scientific worth of the principle of final causes, even in that sense in which its scientific applicability will be generally admitted. The science of history may, indeed, very probably be that in which its employment would be most largely beneficial. Although adaptation, plan, final cause can be traced in inorganic nature, the principle of final causes cannot be maintained to have been of much, if of any, service in strictly physical research; in regard to organic nature, on the other hand, where means and end are specialised into the definite and comparatively easily apprehensible form of organ and function, it has undoubtedly often both prompted and guided inquiry; and in the philosophy of history, the main task of which is to trace how one social state has led on to, and fitted into, another, what part each nation and age has had in relation to each other and to collective humanity, and what the plan is which has embraced and pervaded all history, it may well be of still greater importance. But even where of most importance, can it be maintained to be of independent and intrinsic value? Can the search for final causes be so separated from that into efficient causes and laws as to be capable of being deemed a higher and more comprehensive process resting on a more scientific principle? Or, must not, on the contrary, our knowledge of any class of things be utterly superficial so long as it does not reach beyond the recognition of means and ends in them to law and such causation as law implies? That the eye is constituted for sight and the ear for hearing, that certain trees are adapted to bear apples and others pears, are truths; but a man is not much of a physiologist for knowing them; a man only reaches physiological science when he has added to hese teleological convictions a knowledge of the dynamical and organic processes through which the bodily sense or fruit-tree realises its end. In like manner there can be no historical science worthy of the name if those who occupy themselves therewith are content, as they have too often been, to look at the

histories of nations merely in the light of the results these nations accomplished, or of what are called their missions, instead of taking advantage of that light to prosecute those investigations into laws and efficient causes which alone yield conclusions entitled in the strictest sense to be considered science.

Human history is a composite or collective movement which comprehends a number of distinct although related special movements, into which it requires to be analysed, in order that they may be studied separately, and in relation to one another. A complete analysis must be sought, both for its own sake and as indispensable to a complete synthesis. Such an analysis Dr Hermann has attempted to give us in his sixteenth chapter, by resolving the contents of human culture into its constituent elements; but this is by no means a satisfactory portion of his work, and has not without reason been keenly criticised both by Bona Meyer in the article to which I have already more than once referred, and by G. Biedermann in a special tractate.[1] The direct and immediate relation of man to the outer world, viewed both as spiritual and bodily, is described by Dr Hermann as giving rise to the four fundamental and most important divisions of human culture—viz., religion, science, art, and industry—corresponding to the four chief spheres or aspects of objective existence, the good, the true, the beautiful, and the useful. Then, from the indirect relation of man to the outer world, and his direct relation to society, a further system of four spheres of culture or institutes of life is said to originate—viz., speech, law, ethics, and æsthetics—the first specially related to science, the second to industry, the third to religion, and the fourth to art. International life having two forms is said to be the root of two other divisions—commerce and war. The analysis therefore results in the distribution of human culture into ten elements—religion, science, art, industry, speech, law, ethics, æsthetics, commerce, and war — and of its history into ten corresponding developments. An analysis with such a result

1 Pragmatische und begriffswissenschaftliche Geschichtschreibung der Philosophie, 1870.

is surely its own manifest *reductio ad absurdum*. It never could have ended in separating art from æsthetics, law from ethics, industry from commerce or even from war, unless it had been badly conducted. The examination of it fully confirms this suspicion. The more it is looked at, the more inaccurate, confused, and inconsistent it is seen to be. So numerous, indeed, are its defects, that to expose them even with the utmost brevity would occupy a considerable time. That time I hope to be excused from devoting to the task, seeing that the errors in question have been sufficiently dealt with by the authors to whom I have referred—that some of them at least are not likely to escape any intelligent reader—and that to dwell on them would be apt to leave the impression that Dr Hermann's work is much less meritorious than it really is.

It is, of course, extremely to be regretted that he should have fancied he found in so faulty an analysis "the general law of history." The four chief forms of culture must, he holds, rise into prominence in a fixed and psychologically necessary order of succession, so that each of them will be the distinctive characteristic of a period of time. The order of succession runs thus—art, religion, industry, science. This alleged law—to a statement of which chapters sixty-four and sixty-five are devoted—is associated by our author with an alleged analogy between the life of the individual and the history of humanity, which he has expounded in chapter forty-eight. Biography and general history, according to him, flow parallel to each other, and pass through similar and correspondent stages, although their courses are so unequal in length. The motive influences which prevail in the childhood both of the individual and of the race, are of the lively, joyous, and sensuous kind, which find their expression in art; those which bear sway in the youth of both are of the deeper, more internal, exalted, and spiritual kind to be found in religion; while manhood is distinguished by the sober judgment, cautious reflection, and practical earnestness which find scope in the pursuits of industry; and age by the deeper thoughtfulness and love of wisdom which obtain satisfaction in science. Greece represented childhood and art; the

Germano-Christian world youth and religion; England represents manhood and industry; and Germany will be the representative of age and science.

Views very similar to these we have already met with in Fontenelle, Saint-Simon, Cousin, Littré, Schiller, Fichte, Goerres, and Lasaulx. They are old errors, and have appeared in many forms. But in all forms they rest on false principles which have already been refuted. Dr Hermann, I may merely remark, himself admits that his general law applies only to the history of Europe. Of course it is an admission which he could not refuse to make, for the East in general, although older than Greece, was certainly more religious than artistic; and one of its oldest nations, China, is in its way as industrial and industrious as England. Dr Hermann himself describes the history of the Jews as that in which religion is best represented. Did it follow the history of Greece? In fact, was religion not asserting its supremacy in Judea, and industry and trade flourishing among the Phœnicians about the same time that art was so successfully cultivated by the Greeks? That Greece represented art more than she represented science is a very doubtful proposition; that Germany has done even as much for science as Greece, one which is probably still more doubtful. It is impossible to accept as "the general law of history," one which even those who believe in it confess to apply only to a part of history, however important that part may be. To affirm in justification of this singular notion that a general law may be only of limited and special application, that the history of Europe is alone properly history, proves merely that the conception formed of history by those who thus speak or write, is narrow and arbitrary. It must be a very inaccurate and inadequate view of history which does not allow us to admit that China, India, Persia, and Judea have had histories.

Far the most valuable chapters of Hermann's work are those devoted to the consideration of particular portions and special aspects of history; and these are fortunately much more numerous than those occupied with such generalisations as we have just had under our notice. The East and West, Asia and Europe,

are regarded as two great contrasted historical systems—the former being essentially a complex or aggregate of coexistent peoples—while the most prominent characteristic of the latter is the continous development of its culture through a series of stages. The East is too briefly dealt with, being regarded as a mere "Nebeneinander"—an extreme view which has arisen by reaction from another view equally extreme, the Hegelian, which represented the East as simply the first stage of universal history. Few as the chapters on the East are, instead of being grouped together, they are unnaturally separated and scattered through the volume; for example, the general contrast between the East and the West is the subject of the thirteenth chapter, the general character of the East of the twentieth chapter, and the general distribution of culture in the East of the sixty-third chapter. These faults are the more to be regretted, because the chapters on the East in themselves are, in the main, excellent. The history of Europe, politically considered, is divided into two great epochs — antiquity and the modern world — the middle age not being reckoned an independent period, but a stage of modern history. Some twenty chapters are devoted to antiquity, ten to the middle ages, and about thirty to history since the Reformation. In these chapters, Dr Hermann neither states historical facts nor draws historical pictures; but he lays before us a multitude of historical reflections which have obviously been drawn directly from a long and patient study of the facts. On almost every page the evidences of his having carefully examined the facts from various points of view, with the conviction that only in themselves could their meanings be read, present themselves. Probably he has looked more for meanings than for explanations, for ends than causes; and probably his reflections are, in consequence, seldom scientific results: but they are generally, I believe, such conclusions as science cannot afford to overlook—truths fitted to indicate and illumine the way to science. Of course there are many opinions expressed in these chapters with which I cannot agree. This is particularly the case as regards those on history since the Reformation. Dr Hermann is obviously a man who loves

truth and justice ; but he seems to me to have at times lamentably sacrificed both to what at present passes current in Germany for patriotism—a Teutomania far more rooted and widespread in Germany than Chauvinism in France, and not less irrational or pernicious. This is a subject, however, into which I shall not enter. I prefer parting from Dr Hermann with again expressing my conviction that his work is a most valuable contribution to a department of philosophy which no one has cultivated with a more honourable and self-sacrificing devotion than himself.[1]

[1] In Appendix C will be found an enumeration of a considerable number of German works on the philosophy of history, not mentioned in the foregoing book, with a brief indication of their contents and characters.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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